Free our parents, Burnham kids appeal to Abu

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2001 ★★ 36 PAGES 3 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 228 ₱15

It's all over: Wahid leaving

JAKARTA, Indonesia—Telling family and friends that stress could trigger a third and fatal stroke, ousted head of state Abdurrahman Wahid is preparing to vacate the presidential palace and travel to the United States for medical treatment.

"If I have a third stroke, I will die," Wahid was quoted as saying by Emha Ainun Najib, a Muslim leader and longtime friend.

IT'S/ A12

Paper boats launched near Palace

THE PAPER boats may not have reached the Palace, but the July 9 issue of the INQUIRER did.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's use of literary license

PAPER/ A14

HINDI KASI KAYO NAG-BABASA NG INQUIRER, E!

Big tax cuts for firms, employees

Wage earners need not file tax returns

BY JULIET L. JAVELLANA AND CLARISSA S. BATINO

A PERSON earning less than P75,000 a year is exempt from paying income tax under the administration's proposed tax reform program. He pays as much as P15,000 under the present system.

Under the proposed tax program, if he earns P250,000 a year, he pays only P35,000, a savings of P40,000.

The program seeks to reduce the tax brackets to four from the existing seven.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday said that there was also a proposal to exempt fixed-income earners from filing their income tax returns.

"If you already have a withholding tax, you may prefer not to file your income tax. It's OK. The reason for this is that the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) is swamped with income tax returns. It's added work for them but no additional taxes are collected," he said.

For companies, the proposal is to reduce corporate tax from the current 32 percent to either 26, 21 or 20 percent.

Tiglao said the proposed modified gross income tax system for corporate taxpayers and the new income tax schedule for individual income earners would be discussed at a meeting of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) next week.

The President is expected to certify to Congress the pro-

BIG/ A12

SAVING JUAN DE LA CRUZ

Income	Present tax	New tax	Savings
P 75,000	P 15,000	P 5,250	P 9,750
140,000	35,000	9,800	25,200
250,000	75,000	35,000	40,000
350,000	105,000	73,500	31,500
500,000	160,000	105,000	55,000
1million	320,000	280,000	40,000

Someone 'very, very close' took a bribe

BY MARTIN P. MARFIL, TJ BURGONIO AND ARMAND NOCUM

FOR the first time since her husband was accused of accepting money in exchange for the recall of a vetoed franchise bill, President Macapagal-Arroyo admitted Tuesday that she had known that her correspondence secretary was going to resign because someone "very, very close" to the President had allegedly received a bribe.

The President said a certain Ralph Evangelista had told her that then Palace secretary Veronica "Bing" Rodrigo was planning to quit.

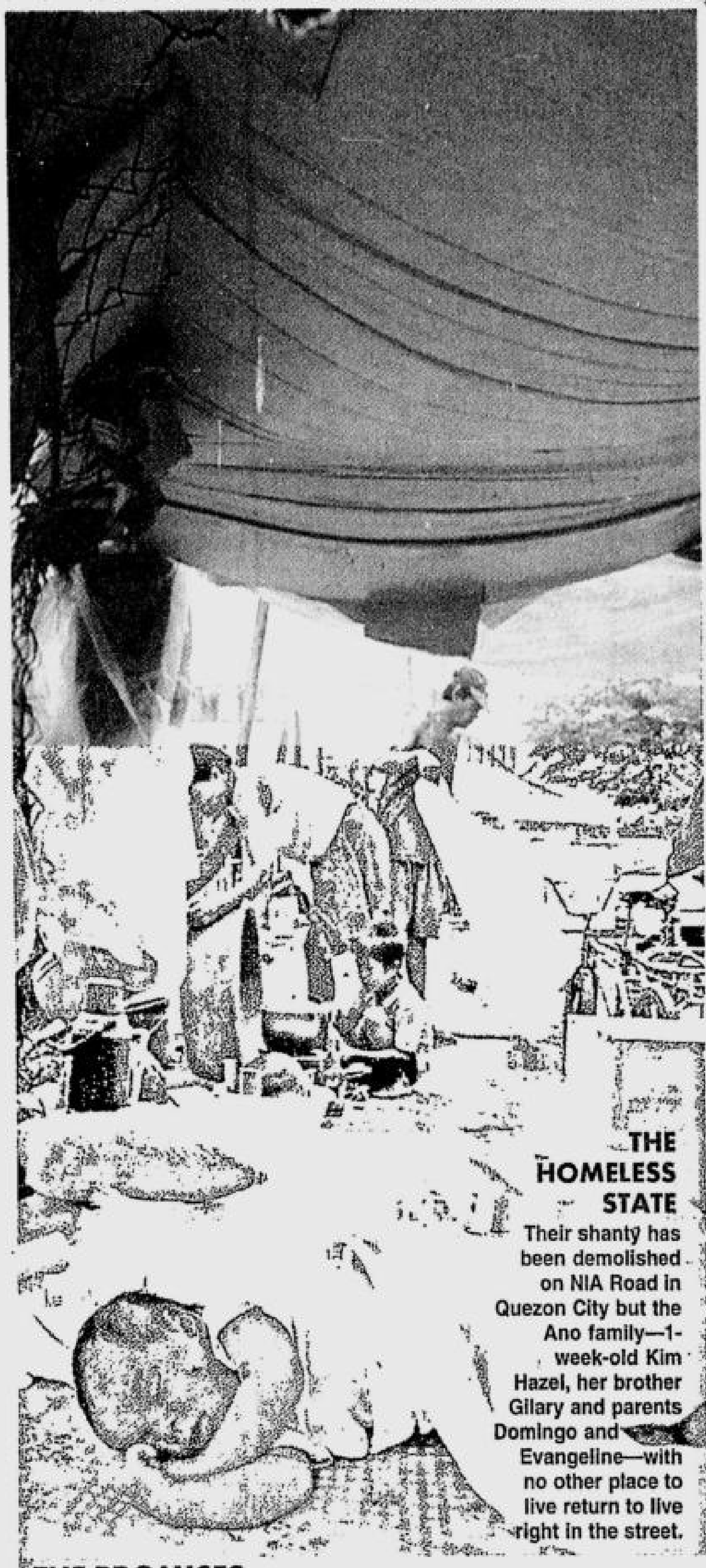
"She was afraid because somebody had already received the money and when it could not be returned, she was being blamed," Ms Macapagal said.

She was referring to a bill she had vetoed that would have granted a telecommunications franchise to a clearinghouse company allegedly owned by prominent businessman Jaime Dichaves, a close friend of her predecessor, Joseph Estrada. The veto was not recalled despite an official request.

Ms Macapagal said she asked Evangelista who had received the alleged bribe to ensure that the presidential veto would be revoked.

"Who then took the money? (Evangelista) said he couldn't re-

SOMEONE/ A14



THE HOMELESS STATE Their shanty has been demolished on NIA Road in Quezon City but the Ano family—1-week-old Kim Hazel, her brother Gilary and parents Domingo and Evangeline—with no other place to live return to live right in the street.

VAL HANDUMON

Kidnappings rise; gang boss nabbed

BY CARLITO PABLO

THE GOOD news: Working under a 90-day deadline to stamp out organized crime, the Philippine National Police yesterday announced the arrest of a leader of a kidnapping gang who is also the No. 1 most wanted person in the Southern Tagalog region.

The bad news: The number of kidnapping cases nationwide rose by almost 100 percent under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo compared to the same period last year, according to official figures.

The PNP recorded a total of 41 kidnapping cases from January to June—almost double the 22 cases recorded in the first semester of 2000.

But Lucas Managuelod, head of the Directorate for Criminal Investigation and Detective Management, noted that while the number of kidnapping cases had risen under the Macapagal administration, authorities had improved on the record of solved cases.

He said that of the 22 kidnapping cases recorded in the first half of last year, nine were solved. But of the 41 cases recorded in the same period this year, 25 were solved.

As for the arrest of the kidnap gang leader, Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, head of the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection

KIDNAPPINGS/ A14

THE PROMISES

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Implementing agency
1. A schoolbuilding per barangay				2004	DECS
2. Textbooks for all Gr. 1 to 4 students		2002			DECS
3. Textbooks for all 1st /2nd yrs		2002			DECS
4. Electoral computerization				2004	COMELEC
5. Cut housing permit signatures to 45		2002			HUDCC
6. Cut steps/signatures by half		2002			Various
7. 1M jobs in agriculture		2002			DA
8. P20B for AFMA		2002			DA/DBM
9. P6B for irrigation		2002			DA/NIA/DBM
10. P4B for post-harvest		2002			DA/DBM
11. P2B for farm-to-market		2002			DA/DBM
12. P2B for agricredit		2002			DA/DBM
13. P2B for research/development		2002			DA/DBM
14. MalMar by September	2001				DA/NIA
15. Lots to 150T urban poor families/yr		2002-		2004	HUDCC
16. Houses to 50T urban poor farm/yr		2002-		2004	HUDCC
17. P20B for housing		2002			SSS/GSIS
18. P5B for housing		2002			HUDCC
19. 1,000 rolling stores		2002			NFA/DA
20. Rice at P14/kg vs P18 at rolling store	2001				NFA/DA
21. 500,000 indigent families at PHIC	2001				PHIC/NAPC
22. 5M families at PHIC			2004		PHIC/NAPC
23. 10,000/yr emergency employment at NCR	2001-		2004		MMDA/DOLE
24. Aircon for LRT 1	2001-		2004		DOTC
25. LRT in Aurora Blvd			2004		DOTC
26. LRT in Quezon Blvd			2004		DOTC
27. LRT from North to Monumento			2004		DOTC
28. LRT from Baclaran to Bacoor			2004		DOTC
29. 1M new borrowers for PCFC			2004		PCFC/NAPC
30. P20B for microfinance from DBP	2001-			2004	DBP/DOF
31. 4 energized bgys/day in 24 months	2001-			2004	DOE/NEA
32. 85% energization in 24 months			7/2003		DOE/NEA
33. Add several billions of pesos for AFP		2002			DBM/DND
34. 100,000 ha public lands redistribution	2001-			2004	DAR
35. 100,000 ha private lands redistributioin	2001-			2004	DAR/LBP

35 Sona promises to be monitored

BY ROCKY NAZARENO

HOW MANY promises will be broken? How many fulfilled?

The promises contained in President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address will be monitored by the leaders of the House of Representatives.

"We will hold the Executive answerable to such promises," declared Albay Rep. Joey Sarte Salceda.

The leaders of the House have "reviewed the Sona and identified at least 35 commitments made by the President together with the corresponding quantifiable targets and pertinent timelines," Salceda said.

A House oversight committee will be created precisely to monitor the performance of the executive department on the 35 promises.

Once formed, the committee will formally inform con-

35 SONA/ A12

15M Filipinos start day with no breakfast

BY JUAN V. SARMIENTO JR.

ABOUT 15.3 million Filipinos wake up every morning without food on the table as a growing number of people in the country live below the poverty line, the Commission on Population (Popcom) yesterday said.

"They are called subsistence individuals or families because they fall below the food threshold, or whose income cannot provide basic food requirements," Popcom said in a statement.

The agency said 40 percent of the country's population of 77 million, or 30.6 million people, live below the poverty line, up from 37 percent in 1997.

President Macapagal-Arroyo cited the same poverty incidence in her first State of the Nation Address on July 23. The figure was culled from unofficial reports of the National Statistical Coordination Board.

"Poverty is not just a statistical indicator. It is a condition that strips people of their dignity and spoils the hope of generations for a better life," Tomas Osias, Popcom executive director, said.

Popcom said an average Filipino should have an annual income of P12,000 to meet his or her food and non-food requirements. A person is considered poor if his income falls below this threshold.

A family of six earning a total of P72,000 a year is not considered poor.

But this amount is way below the P191,878.4 that a family of six must earn every year to live decently in Metro Manila, according to a study that the Statistical Research and Training Center conducted for the National Wages and Productivity Commission.

The study pegged the monthly "living wage"

15M/ A12

NON-SMOKERS' RISK

It takes only 30 minutes…

CHICAGO—Just half-an-hour exposure to secondhand smoke can impair a nonsmoker's normal blood flow to the heart, a Japanese study suggests.

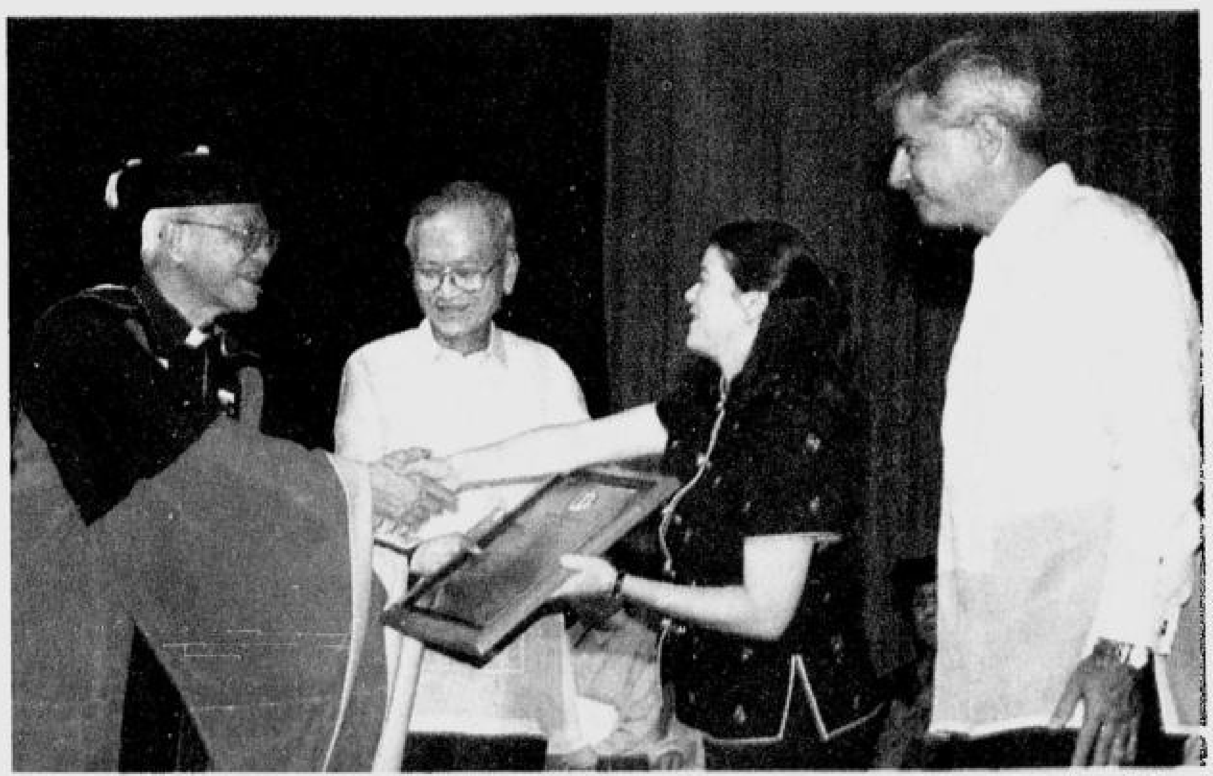
The study, conducted on 15 nonsmoking men and 15 smokers who spent 30 minutes inside a hospital smoking room, found that after exposure to tobacco smoke the blood flow of nonsmokers dropped to the same level found in habitual smokers.

The smokers, whose heart arteries already showed damage, were not further affected by secondhand smoke.

Exposure to tobacco smoke resulted in a reduced ability of the nonsmokers' heart arteries to dilate, which previous research had suggested might be a precursor to the hardening of the arteries.

"This provides direct evidence of a harmful effect of passive smoking on the coronary circulation of

IT TAKES/ A14



TABANG MINDANAW AWARDED. Ateneo de Manila University confers its Public Service Award on Tabang Mindanaw. Its chair Howard Dee and task force member Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez and co-chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, receive the award from ADMU president, Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, during a special academic convocation on Wednesday.

MIKE ALQUINTO

Second FRONT PAGE

KAWAWA NAMAN ANG MGA BATA!

SC asked to move Abu trial

By Alcuin Papa

ZAMBOANGA City Mayor Ma. Clara Lobregat asked the Supreme Court yesterday to order the transfer of the arraignment and trial of Hector Janjalani and other suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf bandit group away from her city for "security" reasons.

Lobregat said the cases against Janjalani and the others had been moved from Basilan to Zamboanga City without her knowledge which "unnecessarily jeopardized and imperiled the generally peaceful and secure conditions of the city of Zamboanga."

She said the city's residents are afraid that the mere presence of the accused would "encourage, foster, or result in the spillover of Abu Sayyaf criminal operations into the city."

In her petition, Lobregat warned that ASG members and supporters might create "serious disturbances" at the trial venue.

Worse, the trial and detention of the group's members in Zamboanga City "will invite daring or desperate rescue attempts by their armed comrades who are still at large," she said.

She also warned that anti-Abu Sayyaf forces, vigilante groups and relatives of the bandit group's victims "may take the law into their own hands and inflict bodily harm on the accused while they are in detention."

She added that the city's jail facilities were inadequate to handle the suspects during their criminal trial.

Free our parents, kids appeal to Abu

THE CHILDREN of a US Christian missionary couple held hostage in Basilan yesterday made heart-wrenching appeals to Abu Sayyaf bandits to free their parents.

The taped appeals of Martin and Gracia Burnham's children Jeff, 14, Mindy, 12, and Zach, 10, were aired on Radio Mindanao Network. The guerrillas have placed telephone calls on the station in the past to communicate their demands.

"You people that have kids must understand what it's like to be separated from your family, so please let them go," Mindy Burnham said.

The Burnhams, Manila residents and members of the New Tribes Mission who were originally from Kansas, were snatched from the Dos Palmas resort off Palawan on May 27 along with a third American and 17 Filipinos.

The Abu Sayyaf has since captured 19 other hostages, murdered at least four, and freed 13 Filipinos—reportedly after payments of huge ransoms. Californian Guillermo Sobero is presumed dead, but his body has not been found.

'Letthem go'

"I want to ask you guys if you could just set my parents free because I would really like to see them again," Jeff Burnham said.

"I miss them a lot, and you know they didn't really do anything wrong. They were just at that resort for their anniversary, and you know, that would be really cool if you could just set them free."

Zach Burnham told the Abu Sayyaf he missed his parents a lot.

"Please let them go. Mom and Dad, I miss you a lot and I hope you can come home soon."

The US Embassy issued a transcript of the messages.

The government is mounting a sustained crackdown on the Abu Sayyaf to cut off their support infrastructure and isolate them in Basilan, where 5,000 troops are conducting a near two-month-old rescue attempt.

Soldiers captured an Abu Sayyaf "intelligence officer" and three others on Tuesday, while a fifth member surrendered, officials said yesterday.

Troops raided the home of Abu Sayyaf suspect Janjala Paradji on Jolo island's Patikul town after a tip-off from villagers, military southern command spokesperson Col. Fredesvindo Covarrubias said.

"The raid was so swift that the terrorist did not have the opportunity to fight back," he said.

Police arrested Abdulfatah Amjali on the same day.

Amjali is believed to be a "henchman" of Abu Sayyaf overall leader Khadaffy Janjalani, the military said, and was positively identified by "several witnesses" as an active member of the group, officials said.

Paradji meanwhile is a "top intelligence officer" of the Abu Sayyaf who helped carry out the abductions last year of dozens of foreign and local hostages they ransomed off for millions of dollars, Covarrubias said.

He said Paradji is included in the military's "order of battle," a list of Abu Sayyaf guerrillas which carry bounties ranging from P 1 million to P 5 million.

Two others identified as Rafael Gahilomo Tumain and Abdullah Ibrahim were also detained in a separate operation in Basilan's capital town of Isabela.

A fifth rebel, identified as Wahab Asalul surrendered to troops on Jolo after negotiations with a local town mayor.

The military has arrested more than 90 Abu Sayyaf suspects, half of whom have been charged with kidnapping and illegal possession of firearms while the other half are being interrogated. *AFP*

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MS. AVELINA CARBUNGCO FLORENDO introduced cake decorating technique in the Philippines the WILTON WAY, the AUSTRALIAN way of making gumpaste flowers with very fine strings and lace on fondant, the ENGLISH way or LAMBETH WORK of overpiped scrolls and strings of very tiny flowers, the SWISS CHOCOLATE TECHNIQUE and GUMPASTE DOLL course. She and her son Jun, introduced the latest technique which they learned in Telford, York & London British Sugar craft & The International Cake Exploration Society last Aug. 9-13, 2000 Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.

1) August 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING (BASIC) - P6,000. Learn the practical & easy method of making 20 kinds of icing flowers, simple borders, scrolls & strings, cake designing, sugar molding, color flow and coloring technique; & exercises in writing, wedding cake assembly inclusive of ingredients. (Next Schedule: September 3,4,5,6 & 7)

2) August 11, 2001 - LEARN THE SUGAR-FREE CAKES AND BREADS - P4,000. Banana, Apple Almond, Chocolate, Apple Cakes & Carrot Cakes, All-Wheat Breads & Raisin Breads without sugar. (Next schedule: Sept 8)

3) August 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD (ADVANCED CAKE DECORATING) - P6,000. New method in making 2 kinds of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilling, swags & ribbons, edible ribbon insertion, finest string works. Lace pieces, and the chocolate fondant. (Next Schedule: September 10,11,12,13 &14)

4) August 15, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT DECORATION USING LACE MATS, ROLLING PIN, QUILTING, SWAGS RIBBONS - P2,500. (Next Schedule: September 12)

5) August 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH RECIPE - P3,500 each. 1) Rose, Catleya and Cymbidum 2) Sampaguita, Sunflower and Waling-waling 3) Poinsettia, Open Rose and Grapes 4) Magnolia, Gerbera and Lilies. (Next Schedule: September 17,18,19,20 & 21)

6) August 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P8,500. 30 recipes consisting of the basic cakes, breads, pastries and cookies. Inclusive of ingredients. (Next Schedule: Sept. 17-21)

7) August 22, 23, 24, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN DOLL COURSE - P5,500. Make everlasting dolls using the latest technique in new Cold Porcelain Recipe. (Next Schedule: September 19, 20 & 21)

8) August 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 2001 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - SPECIAL BAKING - P9,500. Learn to make 30 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has different icing and decoration. (Next Schedule: Sept. 24-28)

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Gov't, MILF to sign new set of documents

COTABATO CITY—The government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front will sign another set of documents next month in time for President Macapagal-Arroyo's first state visit to Malaysia on Aug. 7, an MILF leader said yesterday.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said this was relayed to him by Murad Ebrahim, the head of the MILF negotiators meeting with the government panel at Port Dickson in Malaysia.

Kabalu also said that the negotiations would be suspended "perhaps today or tomorrow" as the government negotiators would be leaving for Manila for consultations.

This would extend the second round of talks, originally scheduled from July 24 to 27, into August, by which time another agreement would have been signed, Kabalu said.

Even as negotiations are going on to end the MILF's 23-year insurgency, the MILF has been setting up three new military camps in Central Mindanao, a high-level military source said.

The source said military field commanders have verified the establishment of MILF facilities in Munai and Nunugan towns in Lanao del Norte and in the municipality of Riapayungan, Lanao del Sur.

The Nunugan camp is reportedly a training camp manned by at least 100 rebels.

The source said the three camps have been put under the command of the MILF's 302nd Brigade under Abdul Rakam Macaapar.

Macaapar, alias Commander Bravo, has been tagged by the military as responsible for the bombing of two passenger buses aboard a ferry boat in Ozamiz City in 1999 which killed 34 people, and for the occupation of Kauswagan town last year and the massacre of Christians in Bumbaran in the Lanao provinces last year.

The camps are near two former MILF camps—John Mack and Bushra.

The source said the Armed Forces have yet to receive orders from the political leadership on how it should deal with this development.

The official believes the MILF is positioning its forces so it can later claim territories in the ongoing peace negotiations.

In the first round of talks, the two sides agreed to uphold previous agreements which include virtual recognition of supposed territories under MILF control.

In Congress, Zamboanga Rep. Celso Lobregat has warned that the peace accord signed by the government with the MILF in Tripoli on June 22 may be unconstitutional and could even "bring about the conflagration of the entire Mindanao."

The accord contained provisions that were against specific orders of the President that the talks be conducted "within the framework of the Constitution to protect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity," Lobregat said in a privilege speech. *Reports from Charlie C. Señase and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau, Carlito Pablo and Rocky Nazareno, Metro Manila*

STILL AT IT

New Mayon eruption feared; Pinatubo folk told: Don't panic

By Jun Malig
PDI Central Luzon Desk

WARNINGS have been sounded anew for residents around the country's most famous volcanoes.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology warned Mayon Volcano in Albay could erupt anew in the coming weeks after it spit out glowing boulders "as big as trucks" Wednesday.

Less than two weeks after evacuees returned home following a previous eruption, intense sulfur dioxide emissions from magma bubbling in the volcano may signal a new eruption, the Associated Press reported, quoting volcanologist Ed Laguerta.

"Mayon is reactivating," Laguerta had said.

He said the volcano has been belching "hundreds and hundreds" of incandescent boulders out of its crater since Friday and it may soon spew lava and ash clouds.

Mayon last erupted on June 24, sending ash clouds 15 kilometers in the air and forcing 50,000 people from their homes.

Scientists downgraded alert levels around Mayon early this month as volcanic activity receded.

New alert

However, Laguerta said, there was a "very high probability" scientists will raise alert levels once more, possibly forcing new evacuations, as volcanic activity increases.

"It seems the volcano wants to keep us awake," Laguerta said.

The alert level around Mayon is currently at level three, of a possible five. Level three means an eruption is possible within weeks, while level five indicates an ongoing eruption.

To the north, in Pampanga, volcanologists advised residents around Mt. Pinatubo "not to panic, but be vigilant."

This after Phivolcs revealed that a notch of Mt. Pinatubo's crater could collapse within a few months with the rise of its lake water.

A crater collapse would release some 33 million cubic meters of water toward Botolan, Zambales, Phivolcs warned.

It advised Botolan officials to evacuate the 2,000 residents of the town's three upstream barangays of Villar, Morasa and Magisgis, which are located near the volcano's crater.

Rising water level

Jaime Sincioco, resident scientist of the Phivolcs Observatory in Pampanga, told the INQUIRER on Tuesday that the water level of Pinatubo's crater lake continues to rise at an alarming rate.

He said the normal volume of the lake water is 164 million cubic meters while its depth is 94 meters.

"Currently water volume is at around 200 million cubic meters and we measured its depth at more than 100 meters," he said.

Sincioco said the height of the Maraunot notch's freeboard is only about five meters compared to 10.3 meters in December last year.

The freeboard is the distance between the high-water mark and the rim of a structure associated with a body of water.

Sincioco said the estimated 33 million cubic meters of water could double or triple once it mixes with volcanic sediments and is transformed into lahar.

"This would mean 66 million to 99 million cubic meters of lahar. But the lahar will have to pass through the Balin-Baquero and Maraunot rivers which have wide containment areas," he said.

In 1995, 55 million cubic meters of lahar flowed through the Pasig-Potrero River in Pampanga and buried the highly populated Cabalantian village in Bacolor, Pampanga, killing more than 100 persons.

Sincioco said the top of the Maraunot notch is 13 meters high, including the freeboard of only five meters. He said that at a normal rate of speed of 25 kilometers per hour, lahar from Pinatubo's crater would reach Botolan in less than two hours. *With a report from AP*

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Ani appeals SC ruling on Erap bank secrecy

By Alcuin Papa
and Donna S. Cueto

THE OMBUDSMAN yesterday asked the Supreme Court to reconsider its ruling barring the independent investigator from looking into the bank records of persons being probed for graft.

In a motion for reconsideration, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto urged the high tribunal to set aside its ruling and uphold the power of his office to look into bank records "to strengthen the probe body in the performance of its task."

"The power to investigate corrupt public officials and private individuals who conspired with them must not be fettered by claims of the privilege of confidentiality, especially where the matter being investigated has been clearly and properly identified and where reasonable safeguards have been adopted," the Ombudsman said.

The motion was also signed by Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo.

In a unanimous ruling last month, the Supreme Court said the Ombudsman could look into the bank records of respondents in a graft complaint only in the five instances allowed under Republic Act 1405, or the Bank Secrecy Law.

Otherwise, a bank cannot be compelled to submit records of its depositors to the Ombudsman.

"Zones of privacy are recognized and protected in our laws," said the court in the decision penned by Associate Justice Bernardo Pardo.

Desierto said he was concerned the high court's ruling would block the prosecution of the plunder case against former President Joseph Estrada.

Although 10 of 11 banks believed to hold the hidden wealth of Estrada have submitted their records to the Ombudsman, Desierto said he might need more evidence from other banks.

Yesterday, government prosecutors asked the Sandiganbayan to summon the presidents of seven banks from which at least P545 million in cashier's checks, linked to the Jose Velarde account, had been drawn.

The banks were PSBank, Global Bank, PCIBank, Equitable PCIBank, Security Bank, Metrobank, and Bank of the Philippine Islands. The checks were purchased from the banks between Sept. 30, 1999 and Dec. 24, 1999.

On another front, the Sandiganbayan rejected yesterday the Ombudsman's third attempt to amend the perjury case against Estrada.

Saying Estrada should have been properly informed of the charges against him before he was arraigned, Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena denied the motion to amend, even as government lawyers presented a detailed list of 51 corporations, in which Estrada allegedly had holdings, which it wanted to include in the case.

The Ombudsman said it was not able to include these corporations in the information for perjury "because of the obvious problem of space."

Opposition senators reject PPC offers

By Armand N. Nocum

OPPOSITION senators yesterday rejected a People Power Coalition offer of a key committee in exchange for their support for the fragile leadership of Senate President Franklin Drilon.

Some senators fear that the continued antagonism between the two opposing blocs in the Senate could have a deadening effect on President Macapagal-Arroyo's legislative agenda.

Opposition senators have been holding a series of meetings to ensure that they are united against accepting any committee chairmanships to prevent their ranks being raided by the 13-man majority.

They have also initiated moves to lure members of administration bloc, including independent Sen. Noli de Castro who provided the crucial 13th vote that installed Drilon in power.

Opposition Sen. Vicente Sotto III, claiming that they can already count on De Castro's support, said the score was now even at 12-12.

"Did he not say in a speech that he was remaining an independent senator and that he is not really a part of the administration bloc?" Sotto said.

In explaining his vote for Drilon on Monday, De Castro said he was not taking an "oath to become a bona fide member of the administration party because I sincerely believe that the opposition maintains a very strong agenda."

In rejecting the committee leadership, opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara said they were taking to heart the statements made by Sen. Joker Arroyo that the two blocs should maintain clear battle lines.

"The prevailing, dominant sentiment is not to accept any committee (role)," Angara said. "Remember, they said they don't want to sleep with the enemy."

Reacting to Angara's statement, administration Sen. Juan Flavier joked that he was not reluctant to sleep with the enemy.

"I will sleep with any of the ladies there, not with the men," he said.

Flavier confirmed that the PPC has offered certain opposition senators the chance to keep key committee leaderships.

The senators involved are Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the national defense and security panel; Sergio Osmeña, agriculture; and Robert Jaworski, environment.

But in a separate briefing, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said the offer was premised on the opposition senator joining the PPC. "When he joins us, that means that he is supporting the administration measures. Then we'll give him a major committee," he said. "How can we give a major committee to a senator who is going to attack the administration? How can that be?"

Biazon said he would accept the offer if there is no condition attached to it. Otherwise, "I might as well do without a committee," he said.

But Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the opposition would decide on the issue as a bloc.

"The majority is now sitting on top of the sharp end of a bayonet, a precarious position," he said.

"They are moving heaven and earth to get more people to their side. I'm not sure they will succeed," he said.

Drilon and Magsaysay admitted that a slim majority could affect the speedy passage of bills.

"When votes would be required on the floor, it is a little thrilling to say the least, if you have that kind of majority," Drilon said.

Magsaysay said passage of bills could take a backseat to partisan politics.

Smear job, Lina says of 'rumors'

INTERIOR Secretary Jose Lina Jr. yesterday said rumors about his impending dismissal were "baseless lies" and part of a "grand smear campaign" to distract him from pursuing his peace and order initiatives.

In a press release, he accused persons interested in his post and those who were affected by the renewed campaign of the Department of Interior and Local Government against criminality of circulating the rumors.

"Rumors of my removal as DILG chief are nothing but baseless lies peddled by persons interested in the post and those whom I may have stepped on as we go on with our renewed drive against criminality, particularly illegal gambling and illegal drugs," Lina said.

He said President Macapagal-Arroyo had assured him that no Cabinet revamp was in the offing, debunking the claims of those behind the rumors.

"I trust the words of the President, as it is only her who can tell me when it is time to go," Lina added.

Recto lawyer says Comelec verdict legal

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

LAWYERS for Sen. Ralph Recto insisted yesterday the National Board of Canvassers' resolution declaring their client the 12th place winner in the Senate race was legal and valid, citing a 1987 Supreme Court ruling which upheld a Comelec decision voted on by five of seven commissioners.

Romulo Macalintal, counsel for Recto, said the SC ruling of Dec. 17, 1987 in the case of Quezon Rep. Junie Cua vs Comelec upheld the 3-2 vote of the election body affirming the proclamation of Cua's rival.

"The three members who voted to affirm the proclamation constituted a majority of the five members who deliberated and voted thereon and their decision was also valid under Article IX-A, Section 7 of the Constitution," the SC ruling said.

"NBOC Resolution No. 01-006 on the senatorial rankings was valid because there was a quorum when the Comelec en banc decided," Macalintal said. "Majority of the members were present during the deliberation."

Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo also cited the Cua case to justify the promulgation of NBOC Resolution 01-006 by three commissioners.

Benipayo also said procedures for canvassing under Comelec Resolution No. 4343 only require a majority vote of the commissioners present.

Only three of the seven-member Comelec—Benipayo and Commissioners Rex Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr.—approved NBOC Resolution 01-006.

Two other commissioners, Luzviminda Tancangco and Rufino Javier, dissented while Commissioners Mehol Sadain and Ralph Lantion were absent when the resolution penned by Borra was submitted to a vote.

Lawyer Rufus Rodriguez, counsel for Sen. Loi Ejercito, however, said the reference of Benipayo and Macalintal to the Cua case was misplaced as the facts of the case were different.

Rodriguez said the 3-2 vote in Cua vs Comelec was upheld by the SC since at the time, one member of the Comelec had died while another commissioner had abstained from voting.

"Effectively, there were only five members because one was dead and another deliberately refused to vote," Rodriguez said.

He said the present Comelec has seven members, three of whom voted in the affirmative while two dissented.

"The two others, Sadain and Lantion, were absent and were not given the opportunity to participate," Rodriguez said. "The Comelec en banc should have reset the deliberations to allow the two others to participate."

Asean officials hail progress on Spratlys code of conduct

HANOI—Southeast Asian foreign ministers on Tuesday welcomed progress in consultations between Asean and China for a code of conduct to ease conflicting territorial claims in the South China Sea.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations ministers, ending their annual meeting, also called for restraint among rival claimants in the area identified as one of the region's potential military flash points.

"We reviewed developments in the South China Sea and welcomed the progress in the consultations between ASEAN and China towards the adoption of the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea," said a joint communique issued at the close of the two-day gathering.

The ministers also "encouraged the continued exercise of self-restraint by all the parties concerned and the promotion of confidence building measures in this area and welcomed their commitment to resolving disputes in the South China Sea by peaceful means in conformity" with UN laws.

The code would cover the Spratlys, a chain of islands in the South China Sea claimed in whole or in part by Asean members Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Vietnam, along with non-members China and Taiwan.

Believed to sit on vast oil and natural gas deposits, the chain is seen as a potential flash point for armed conflict because all the claimants except Brunei have troops stationed in the area, which also covers strategic shipping lanes and rich fishing grounds.

Completion of the proposed code, which seeks to set rules governing activities in the South China Sea, has been delayed by a lack of consensus among claimant nations on the area to be covered.

Vietnam wants the disputed Paracel islands, which are occupied by China, to be included in the code.

The Philippines has circulated a new draft of the code, which dropped any reference to geographic boundaries in a bid to break the impasse.

China and Taiwan claim the entire South China Sea on historical grounds.

However, the new draft needs to be studied further by the senior officials in meetings leading to the Asean leaders' summit in Brunei in November.

At their meeting on Monday, the Asean ministers urged their senior officials to speed up completion of the code, a confidence-building measure aimed at easing tension in the area, where there have been occasional confrontations between Chinese fishermen and the navies of rival claimants.

The ministers are expected to discuss the Spratlys during a meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan during the Asean Regional Forum on security issues here Wednesday. *AFP*

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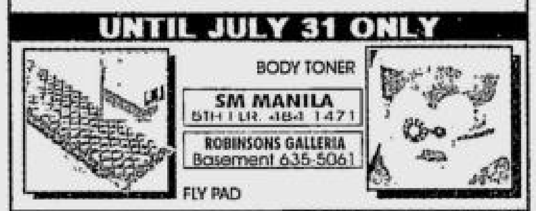

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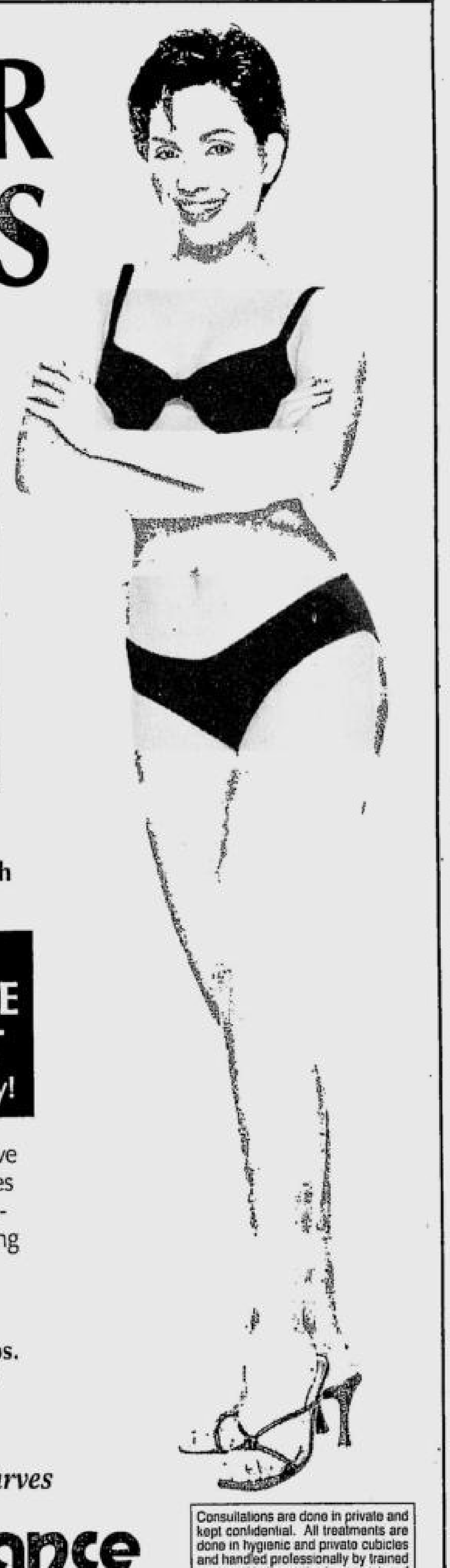

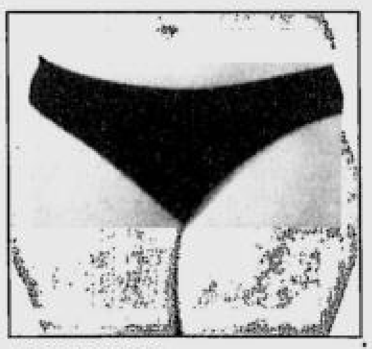

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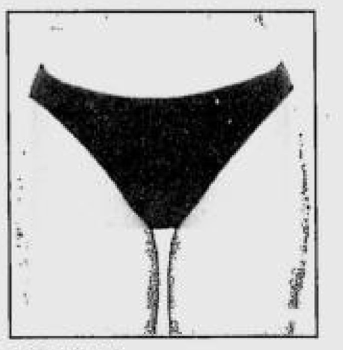

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Two democracies, two different paths

EDITORIAL

WITHIN a span of seven months, two democratically elected presidents in Southeast Asia fell from power. The first was President Joseph Estrada who was deposed last January, and the second was President Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia, who was dismissed from office by the People's Consultative Assembly (MPR) last Monday.

There are many similarities in the circumstances of their fall from power but these should not be allowed to cloud judgment over the long-term prospects of democracy in the Philippines and Indonesia.

Wahid was dismissed by a 591-0 vote of the assembly, the highest Indonesian state organ, after he provoked a constitutional crisis by declaring a state of emergency ahead of the start of impeachment proceedings on Aug. 1 to remove him for alleged incompetence and corruption. The refusal of the armed forces to follow his order to disband the assembly, in an effort to keep power, forced the assembly to move the process forward.

Estrada held power for 30 months; Wahid for only 21 months. The fact that both were democratically elected did not stop their removal. In the Philippines, the failed impeachment trial of Estrada sparked the popular uprising that led to his fall. In Indonesia, Wahid was stripped of power by the assembly which elected him president in 1999. The process of removal in Indonesia was constitutional. In the Philippines, the assumption of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the presidency was clouded with constitutional doubts after Estrada stepped down without formally resigning. The Indonesian process was more straightforward. Wahid did not have to go through a long impeachment process, as Estrada did. Both Estrada and Wahid protested that their dismissal was illegal and unconstitutional.

In both crises, Estrada and Wahid were charged with corruption and incompetence; and the military's withdrawal of support forced the collapse of government. Estrada left Malacañang after Ms Macapagal was sworn in by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Wahid continues to be holed up at the Merdeka Palace, refusing to recognize reality, but he is expected to leave the Palace without being dragged out.

Defying all predictions, Wahid's removal took place peacefully. His defiant warning that his mass following in Java would rise up in revolt if he were impeached by the assembly did not come true.

So, two of Southeast Asia's democracies are now ruled by women. By sheer coincidence, Indonesia's new president, Megawati Sukarnoputri, was Wahid's vice president. The assembly followed the constitutional route on succession. The Filipinos also followed this route after the collapse of the Estrada government.

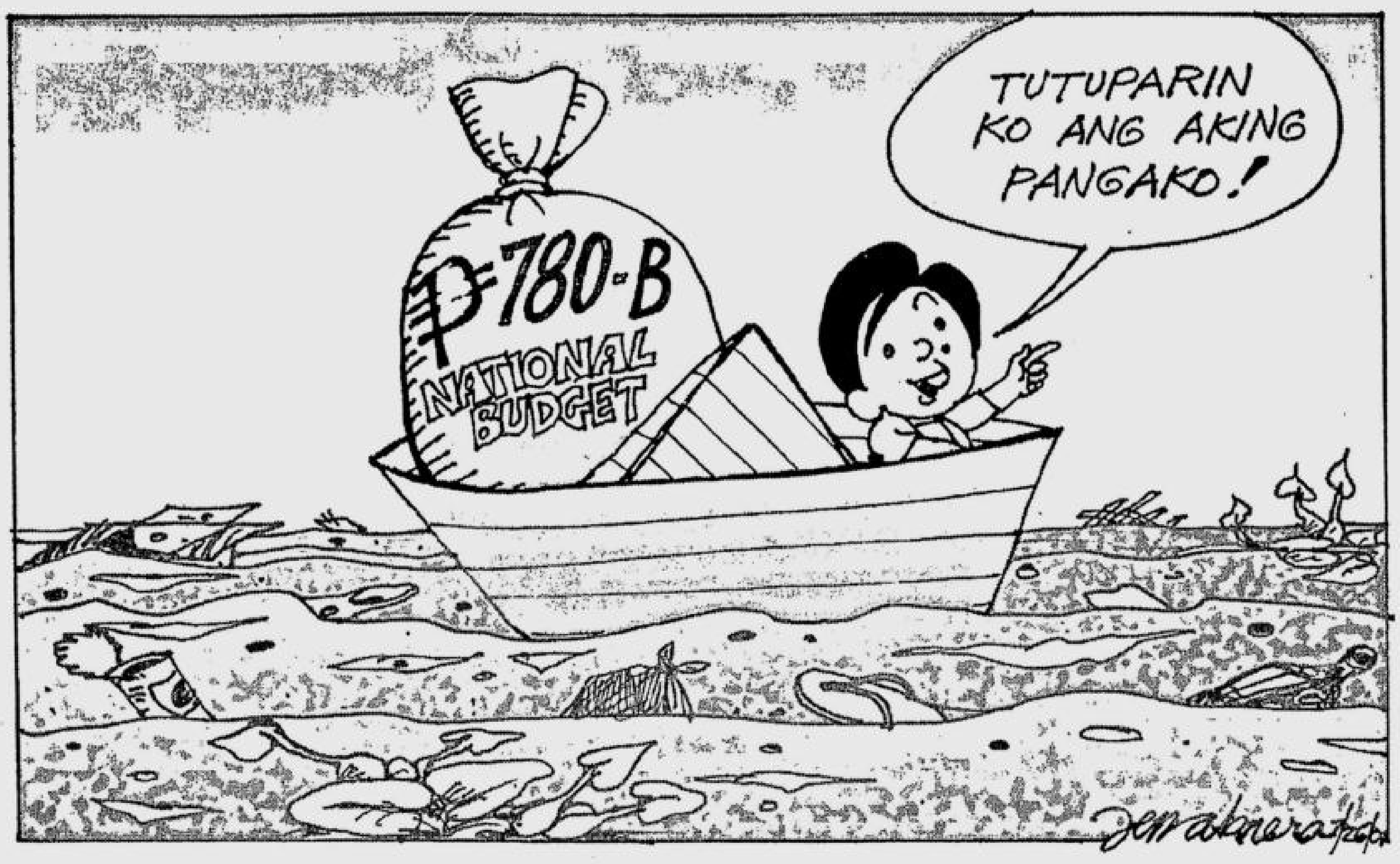
Another uncanny coincidence is that Ms Macapagal's father, President Diosdado Macapagal, and Megawati's father, President Sukarno, were contemporaries in the post-colonial regional alliance-making in Southeast Asia.

Having followed their own constitutional process, the Indonesians have achieved two peaceful power transfers in just two years. In 1999, Wahid was elected by the assembly to succeed the caretaker government of President B.J. Habibie. The removal of Wahid marked the assertion of legislative power and the return of the armed forces to the pivotal role of political kingmaker in Indonesia.

The lesson from the fall of the two leaders is that a democratically elected government can no longer be confident of holding on to power. Henceforth, elected presidents would do well to consider that their longevity in office could also depend on good governance and competence—qualities which both Estrada and Wahid didn't possess.

Megawati and President Macapagal now face daunting problems that stretch the resilience of their respective political systems. They are plagued with separatist rebellions and an economic downturn, while presiding over political systems that are still groping for stability. Here, we have two democracies trying to find their way to stability, stumbling in the process, but also redefining their political systems according to their cultures.

Indonesia and the Philippines are walking on two different paths of democracy that turns on its head the Western concept of that political system. But if we learned from Western models, they can also learn from our evolution.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Urban agriculture will create more jobs

(Continued from yesterday)

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

HERE are excerpts from the open letter of Director Edgar B. Aglipay of the Philippine National Police to Ador, the former Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force informer who implicated him in the drug trade:

"It is exactly one week now since you implicated my name in the illegal drugs but which up to this day you have not substantiated with any piece of evidence. My family has suffered long enough hearing you malign our name and reputations. Enough is enough.

"I completely and categorically deny your baseless, unfounded and whimsical statements linking me to an alleged drug distribution activity. In said statement, you said that former Chief PNP and now Sen. Panfilo Lacson gave you instructions to contact me through my publicly announced cellular phone number 09175360391.

"How could these allegations be true when the last time that Senator Lacson and I talked was the day after Edsa Dos when out of courtesy, I explained my reasons for withdrawing support from the Estrada government.

"I have always maintained a good career record and I will not jeopardize my reputation by being involved in any nefarious or illegal activity whether in the past, present or future. I have been serving my country as an officer for 30 years from the time I graduated from the (Philippine Military) Academy in 1971. As a young lieutenant, I was awarded the Gold Cross for bravery in 1972 for leading the patrol team that captured the m.v. Karagatan which was full of armaments for the CPP/NPA...

"... I want to continue looking at my family and the Lord when I go to church with no guilt knowing that I have done no harm to my fellow men and my country.

"I wish to thank PNP Chief, Director General Leandro Mendoza, for vouching for my conduct and my performance and the majority who have come to my defense.

"I ask you to be more responsible in your statements. Nevertheless, my family and I still continue to pray that the Good Lord will enlighten you."

* * *

Among the plans President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo revealed in her State of the Nation Address is to give emergency jobs to out-of-school youth. She probably already has jobs waiting for them, but may I add a proposal for more jobs to more out-of-school youth. I already proposed this in an earlier column but I'll repeat it if it will help create more jobs. This is urban farming, or planting vegetables on vacant lots and backyards in urban areas. The recent typhoon that cut off Baguio from the rest of Luzon, causing the prices of vegetables in Metro Manila to shoot up shows why we need urban farming.

Besides providing urban dwellers with a steady supply of cheap and fresh vegetables, urban farming will provide them with a means of livelihood. Vegetables coming from the provinces are often very expensive because they pass through at least 15 layers of traders, not to say police checkpoints, before it reaches the consumer. Worse, by the time they arrive in the markets, half have already spoiled, for which reason the traders double their prices to recoup their loses.

At the same time, there are hectares and hectares of idle land in and around the cities and municipalities comprising Metro Manila and other urban areas. One big piece of idle land is a lot sequestered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government. It is located at the corner of C-5 and Ortigas Avenue in Pasig and the PCGG is not doing anything with it. It is just wasting away.

But it is a perfect place for a vegetable garden to be cultivated by street children. It even has some unused buildings that can serve for processing surplus produce and as living quarters for the street children who will join the urban farm. An NGO, KaMMPi Inc., has offered to teach the children how to raise vegetables and run the farm. Its office is at 533 Jade, corner Garnet Lane, Cristimar Village, Antipolo City. The PCGG can reach it through telefax no. 696-0434, or through cell phone 0917-989-5209.

* * *

There is another place just outside Metro Manila that can replicate Trinidad Valley in faraway Benguet as a vegetable-growing center and create many jobs. This is the Boso-boso Valley in Antipolo. It has the same climate as Trinidad Valley. It has plenty of water and is surrounded by poultry farms as sources of fertilizer.

A farmer already tried planting cabbage on his half-a-hectare farm. He produced so much that some of the harvest rotted. See the potential of the valley?

With a big vegetable garden so near the metropolis, traders don't have to travel great distances for fresh vegetable supply. Thus, transportation cost would be minimal. Market vendors and even consumers themselves can make the short trip to Boso-boso to buy directly from the farmers.

Boso-boso as a vegetable-growing valley may yet save the remaining trees on the hillsides around it. The squatters who have invaded it are mercilessly cutting down the trees for charcoal. Siltation and pollution have already endangered the Boso-boso River and reservoir which used to be the principal source of drinking water for Manila. With vegetable gardening as a means of livelihood, the squatters don't have to make charcoal anymore. It may even encourage them to plant fruit trees on the bald hillsides.

* * *

Comments are welcome at asiseeit@ pacific.net.ph

Fusillades on ramparts

WINDMILLS

Jerry Barican

RUMORS and government go together like love and marriage. The dilemma with them is best captured by what they used to say about the Chiang Kai Shek regime in China during the 1930s: Ninety percent of the rumors, it was said, was untrue; the trouble was that the 10 percent was worse than the rumors.

Consequently, what you see in print is a small fraction of the legion of stories that go around town under any administration. Metro Manila is a town with ultimately no secrets, where stories grow in the telling and where truth and balance are highly subjective things. But always, always, keep a good look-out for that 10 percent.

The question then becomes, how do citizens in general and this columnist in particular respond to the President's call for national unity and an end to bickering in these difficult times? One extreme is to convert this space to the local equivalent of "Pravda," the infamous and ironically named ("Truth") newspaper of the Soviet Communist Party. In this rosy red view, everything approaches perfection and officials are all public servants *sans reproche*.

The other extreme is to take the position that when an airplane is in an emergency dive and the pilot is desperately trying to regain control, any passenger has the perfect right to enter the flight deck to hector him about a stain in the carpet or the quality of the linen.

De minimis non curat lex. The law is not concerned with trifles. And in the case of presidents, neither should we. History does not judge a president on the little things but on the big ones. Harry Truman was perhaps the best example of this—occasionally loud, sometimes petty, but a man of integrity, decency and courage.

In times of crisis, the executive must be given leeway to try bold experimentation. That suggests that there will be failures as well as successes. Leadership consists in the willingness to take chances, the ability to learn and, above all, in character. The presidency is not about brains. It is about character.

This brings us to the position of The Manila Times publisher, Dante Ang, who has described himself and his newspaper as "pro-Gloria but not pro-administration." It is not a bad formulation for a honeymoon or a truce. It suggests that while the President will be given support especially during the crisis, the members of her government cannot expect to be extended the same mantle of protection.

It is the natural tendency of Malacañang staffers, for instance, to identify an attack on them as an attack on the president. It isn't. It strains the role of a free press to the breaking point to take that view of a political honeymoon. Exposing malfeasance, stupidity or arrogance in the government ultimately does the president a service. Ignoring it explains why the unlamented "Daily Express" ("Daily Suppress") of the martial law years is no longer with us. And don't forget about the power of rumors.

Having been on both the giving and receiving end of criticism, I am amazed at how some of those who were generous with their criticism while outside government become ultrasensitive to it once they are within. Having also seen how unfair criticism can be for the defenseless public official, I try—though I do not always succeed—to write with restraint. The rest of the arsenal is kept well dry. The fusillades on the ramparts of government will be deliberate and sparing. Exploding shells illuminate but they can also indiscriminately destroy.

I will therefore continue support for the President in this space, even on those occasions, and they will come, when I may have strong personal doubts about the wisdom of a particular course of action. Even then, any cautioning will be low key and friendly. I'll try to stay away from the flight deck.

But individual members of the administration may not escape lightly. Even then, restraint is not an unwise policy. Disagreements can be made politely. Although I have been warned by some that I must resort to pyrotechnics to induce reader interest, it is a course I will not generally follow. But arrogance, triumphalism and sanctimony are exceptions to the rule. In Hamlet's words, "the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely... the insolence of office..." get my dander up.

Finally, let me quote from Sen. William Pitt Fessenden's famous eulogy delivered in the US Senate upon the death of a colleague in 1866, to remind us about the ordeal that often faces a public servant. He spoke "of how much courage he must possess to resist the temptations which daily beset him; of that sensitive shrinking from undeserved censure which he must learn to control; of the ever-recurring contest between a natural desire for public approbation and a sense of public duty; of the load of injustice he must be content to bear, even from those who should be his friends; the imputations of his motives; the sneers and sarcasms of ignorance and malice; all the manifold injuries which partisan or private malignity, disappointed of its objects, may shower upon his unprotected head."

There are scoundrels here and there but there are also surprisingly large numbers of those invested with public authority who do a good and honorable job under the most trying and thankless conditions. Having been there, even briefly, I will not be the first to fire wanton fusillades on the harassed defenders of the ramparts. But I didn't say anything about warning shots.

Boncodin's reputation for producing money for projects

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE CONSENSUS is that the Cabinet flavors of the season, as far as President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is concerned, are those who deal with money matters: Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho. Boncodin has to balance the budget so that there is money to finance government programs, while Camacho has to keep the peso strong and healthy in relation to other currencies and raise the necessary money, through the two revenue collecting agencies under him, the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Very much in the hands of these two officials is the fulfillment of many promises made by GMA in her State of the Nation Address.

* * *

Insiders concede that Boncodin is very *malakas* with the President because she is good at looking for the necessary funding for projects. The DBM chief has always been low key, but she was an undersecretary during the Ramos administration, and when Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez left, she assumed the top post until FVR's exit in June 1998. A business administration and accountancy graduate of the University of the Philippines, where she was a government scholar, Boncodin became an Edward Mason fellow in Harvard University where she earned her MA in public administration. She placed 15th in the CPA board in 1975.

On the other hand, Camacho was a banker for many years before he joined GMA's Cabinet, first as energy chief, where it was his task to explain the controversial administration-certified power bill to the public. NGOs which heard him were impressed by his mastery of the topic. As finance chief, Camacho has to exude an air of confidence in handling the deteriorating peso, and his banking background enables him to play tug-of-war with the banks in propping it up.

* * *

The story of the three Payatas kids who wrote the President about their wishes and made their letters into paper boats to float down the Pasig River does seem hard to believe, especially if it's taken to mean that GMA fished them out of the Pasig and read them. At the reception after the Sona, I queried former Information Minister Greg Cendaña if he believed the children's story and he said it's true, but quickly added with his characteristic naughty wink, "They forgot to put a girl in the group."

* * *

From what I gathered, what happened was that many children in Payatas, who were under one of the many NGOs working in the dump, were asked one day to sit down and write what they desired most from the government. They were then asked to make the letters into paper boats and these were floated down the Pasig. Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman heard about it and told the President, who liked the story so much that she asked Soliman to look for the kids. GMA then decided to, as Star columnist Dick Pascual put it, use the kids to put human faces on her speech. Last Monday afternoon, the three kids' parents sat in choice seats at the Batasan and were among the many, including some members of Congress, who shed tears at the sight of the children being given a rousing ovation, together with GMA.

Incidentally, everyone noticed when the Senate opposition on the front row remained seated during the ovation. Joining them on the other side of the hall was Sen. Serge Osmeña, who won as a PPC candidate and voted with the opposition in the election of the Senate president.

* * *

Actually, there's another boy from Basilan whose appeal letter actually got to the President by mail. This boy was summoned from Basilan and showed up at the National Peace Congress last weekend at the Ateneo University. He was supposed to join the three Payatas kids for the Sona, but he was excluded perhaps after the speech was shortened.

* * *

Executive Secretary Bert Romulo studiously tabulated the number of applause given to his boss and came up with 91. I told him later that if he cut that by half, that would probably be the number that sprang from the heart of the crowds. That still qualifies GMA's Sona as the most applauded in history.

Actually, while GMA really worked on that Sona—there were five Cabinet meetings on it and she practiced its delivery in that cavernous hall at midnight of Sunday, with her speech coach, Repertory Philippines directress Zeneida Amador—administration officials ensured that an appreciative crowd would show up at the Batasan. I've never seen the session hall so packed for a Sona before (they had to put chairs right on the session floor). The *pala* applause was initiated always by the same groups.

* * *

GMA's Sona was devoid of the lofty, delicately balanced sentences and elegant turn of phrase that used to characterize President Cory Aquino's Sonas. The soaring rhetoric and elegance befitted Aquino as the icon of Edsa, which she will always be. By contrast, GMA's Sona was a report to the nation, studded with bullet points of goals and targets, a working speech full of common sense and plain talk, as she put it. It was a tradition that President Ramos started, with his rolled-up *barong* sleeves. GMA's Sona sounded very much like her, the unflinching taskmaster driving her people hard to work, work, work, unlike Erap's two Sonas, which belonged to the ghost writer.

* * *

I have been following the controversy between First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and resigned Palace correspondence secretary Bing Rodrigo closely. Going for Rodrigo is the fact that she is the daughter of the late Sen. Francisco Rodrigo, a much-loved and respected politician of another generation.

On the other hand, there are two things to consider. The Daily Tribune quoted an unnamed source as opining that most newspapers were wrong when they wrote about Mike Arroyo being given a P50-million bribe for efforts to recall the presidential veto. The fact is, said the Tribune, the bribe was to allow the bill granting a telecommunications franchise to Jaime Dichaves to merely lapse into law. Bills become law when the president fails to act on them within 30 days from submission to Malacañang by Congress. Allowing a bill to lapse into law is very seldom resorted to. One such bill renamed the international airport to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, and President Cory allowed to let it lapse into law out of *delicadeza*. Had GMA allowed the franchise bill, which would grant the Dichaves group undue advantage, to lapse into law, about 13 other groups in the industry would have raised a howl. But this is now moot and academic. GMA vetoed the bill.

Another thing to point out is that Mike Arroyo has to be superdumb to take a huge bribe from Dichaves, who was one of Erap's closest cronies. Recall that it was this character who came forward to claim the Velarde account for his own.

A sorry cybertale

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ETERNALLY cropping up in congressional discussions is the inequity in our laws that makes it a crime for a married woman to commit adultery, but not so for a married man. So while a single instance of sex with a person other than her spouse can brand a wife a criminal, her husband can have all the sex he wants with other women (or men) and remain scot-free and married to her.

To be similarly punished, a married man must commit concubinage, which is defined as cohabiting with a woman other than your wife under scandalous circumstances. To be accused of concubinage, a man must either bring another woman into the conjugal home, or live with her under the same roof in full view and knowledge of the public.

Attempts have been made to rewrite our laws, so that both husband and wife would be covered under a single provision that holds them equally guilty of "marital infidelity." In the last Congress, Abanse! Pinay Rep. Pat Sarenas reported that male members of Congress seemed amenable to changing the law, but were extremely reluctant to hold men to a draconian law that would make a single instance of extra-marital sex a crime. The old sexual double standard rears its ugly head again.

But even while legislators continue debating the old adultery-concubinage question, the new technologies have been pushing the envelope of questionable human behavior. Now married people can cheat on their spouses without having to shed a single item of clothing. We've all heard heartwarming tales of cyberromances where couples meet and fall in love by exchanging e-mail or rendezvousing in chat rooms. Apparently, not everyone among these cybercouples is on the up and up. So a "faithful" spouse can be having a torrid online affair with a third party without technically committing adultery, much less concubinage (unless you consider co-habiting the same chatroom a scandalous circumstance).

* * *

CALL this woman's story, then, a cautionary fable, one in which online adultery merely adds spice to the age-old battle of the sexes. True to our theme, I got her story through e-mail, so take it with the proper caveats.

"I am an avid reader, since college days," "BR" writes by way of introducing herself. "I was a student activist, a self-proclaimed feminist. I am married with three kids, and am now at the crossroads of my life.

"I am an abused wife, if not physically, then emotionally and psychologically. But the abuse became physical last Monday, July 23. It was the second time. My medical certificate shows swelling in my cheek, where I was punched, hematoma on my left and right thigh, my arms, wrists...but my bruises are not enough (proof). No. I should have been in a hospital right now, in a coma, before I will get our society to believe that yes, I am an abused wife."

Her husband, BR writes, is almost "too good to be true." Her own mother refused to believe BR's stories of abuse until she saw him beat up her daughter. "I am a successful professional, a strong character, a survivor...The barangay counselor who heard us at our first hearing said that I just needed a little 'loving-loving.' And many people to whom I've told my story believe I should still take him back."

The circumstances of her husband's affair were quite "unusual," writes BR. "He had a cyberaffair. I found the woman's e-mail in his 'secret' e-mail address. They tell me he never really had an actual affair, just letters in the Internet. I saw the letters from him to the girl and from the girl to him. It devastated me just the same had he had the affair with a woman here. My trust in him is shattered."

* * *

WHAT hurts most, BR says, is that up to this point her husband still believes he "did nothing wrong." He even justified his cyberaffair by declaring that if he really intended to be unfaithful, he would have had an "actual" affair.

"Maybe, it is about time our family code (is) broadened and updated. Cyberspace is there. Some marriages are shattered because the husband would rather have cybersex than (physical sex) with his living, breathing wife. My marriage is shattered because my husband has been missing and loving some 17-year-old girl 10,000 miles away and not his wife just a few kilometers away working hard to support our family.

"I am the breadwinner of my family. And instead of being cherished for this, I am always tested. He firmly believes that I am an arrogant bitch because I earn in a month what he earns in a year. I never knew until now that a woman's hard work to provide a decent life for her family is an excuse for a husband to beat her and have affairs (cyber and actual) to validate his manhood. Because for sure that is what people say.

"I thought marriage is about two people who are committed to cherish and love each other for all eternity...About saying you are sorry when you hurt somebody, whether you believe you are at fault or not. And if there are times we hurt that somebody we love, we never do it on purpose. But my scars and bruises show that I have been beaten on purpose, regardless of my righteous indignation."

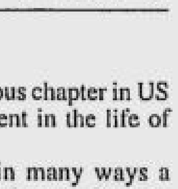
"BR" wants to know: "If I go to court for annulment for psychological incapacity, would the cyberaffair hold water? If I take him back, will I ever trust him again? What is a marriage without faith? Without trust?"

On the first question, "BR," "a smart lawyer can provide the answer. For the rest, unfortunately, while friends, family and sympathetic columnists can offer the proverbial shoulder to cry on, the only answers that count will have to come from your heart.

A woman's life

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo



LAST week I was driving to the office when I received a text message on my cell phone. The first two words startled me and I didn't want to read the entire message. But it was all of five words and my eyes took it all in one glance. It said: *"Patay na si Katharine Graham."*

The message came from one of the INQUIRER editors. Maybe I wanted to know, the editor said when I arrived at the INQUIRER. It was like a member of the family died.

That early in the day, the wires and the Internet were already churning out news and features on the life and times of Katharine Graham plus photos of her at the prime of her life and shortly before she died.

The legendary Katharine Graham, "icon of the free press the world over," as the INQUIRER called her, died July 17 after suffering head injuries caused by a fall on a concrete walkway in Idaho where she was attending a business meeting. She never recovered after an operation. She was 84.

The INQUIRER carried two front-page stories, accompanied by a photo of her with that great stride and generous laughter. Her death was a great loss for many, especially journalists and women.

But we never even got to meet her in person. The closest we got to her was meeting and interviewing her daughter, Newsweek contributing editor Elizabeth Graham-Weymouth who was here last May to observe the elections and interview President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

One of the great legacies Graham left behind, besides courage in journalism, was the story of her life, contained in her 1997 Pulitzer Prize winning autobiography and bestseller "Personal History." The wonder is that she came out with it when she was 79.

As publisher, Graham steered the Washington Post through the crises of the Pentagon Papers and Watergate during the Nixon presidency in the 1970s. The story of the Watergate scandal and the role of Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein was made into the movie "All the President's Men" starring Robert Redford and Dustin Hoffman.

Wrote Graham of that tumultuous chapter in US history and the "transforming event in the life of Washington Post":

"As a story, Watergate was in many ways a journalist's dream—although it didn't seem that way in those first months when we were so alone. But the story had all the ingredients for major drama: suspense, embattled people on both sides, right and wrong, law and order, good and bad.

"Watergate—that is, all of the many illegal and improper acts that were included under that rubric—was a political scandal unlike any other. Its sheer magnitude and reach put it on a scale altogether different from past political scandals, in part because of the unparalleled involvement of so many men so close to the president and because of the large amounts of money raised, stashed, and spent in covert and illegal ways. This was indeed a new kind of corruption in government."

Katharine Graham was described as the "awkward child who grew up amidst material wealth and emotional isolation; the young bride who watched her brilliant charismatic husband—a confidant of John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson—plunge into the mental illness that would culminate in his suicide...the widow who shook off her grief and insecurity to take on a president and a pressman's union as she entered the profane boys' club of the newspaper business."

Graham backed her editors during the Watergate scandal. And when lauded for her courage, she said: "The truth is that I never felt there was much choice. Courage applies when one has a choice. With Watergate, there was never one major decisive moment when I, or anyone, could have suggested that we stop reporting the story...Once I found myself in the deepest water in the middle of the current, there was no turning back."

Here's more of her story on Watergate, in case you can't get hold of "Personal History":

"It was an unbelievable two years of pressured existence, which diminished only a little as other publications joined us and as the separate investigations and the court cases spawned by Watergate began to confirm our reporting...Watergate threatened to ruin the paper. The Post and the Washington Post Company survived partly because of the great skill and tenacity that our reporters and editors and executives brought to bear throughout the crisis and partly because of luck...

"Luck was on our side... From the first incident of the guard finding the taped door at the Watergate building, to the police sending to the scene of the crime a beat-up looking undercover car that was cruising in the area rather than a squad car that might have tipped off the burglars, to the sources willing—some even eager—to talk and help...We were lucky that those under investigation compounded their own situation by further mistakes and misassessments. We were lucky we had the resources to pursue the story...We were lucky Nixon was eccentric enough to set up a taping system in the White House, without which he might have completed his term."

But Watergate and Washington Post are only a few chapters in "Personal History." There is so much more about Katharine Graham that is revealed in her memoir.

Graham asks toward the end of her book, "Why dare to write a book? What makes any of us think that someone else would be interested in a story from our own past? For me, there was a mixture of motives..."

Read "Personal History" when you get the chance.

A winner's tale

DO I consider myself a winner? If you consider talent (ahem) and skills, I've had my share of triumphs as a student. I was the 50-meter dash champion in high school, for which I got P20 and a blue banner. I was the champion declaimer during Linggo ng Wika. My prize: a Filipino-English dictionary. Count also my being declared as Best Muse during a basketball tournament. (Oh, okay, it was because I was the only muse who showed up.) I likewise won in a fiesta singing contest and got P300. I became the first prize winner too in our college's English Week Poetry Contest and became P500 richer.

In the beginning

But nothing beats winning contests that hundreds join. My first "official" win was in grade school at St. Scho. My name was picked and the Encyclopedia agents visited our house and sweet-talked my mom into buying a set. Were we lucky or what? Whatever, the thought of being singled out made me feel special.

YOUNGBLOOD

Ma. Lalaine B. Reyes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

Being snack junkies, my sisters and I, together with Dad, often go to supermarkets. We join raffles and salivate at the prizes, usually home appliances.

One time, my teacher told me I had won the grand prize, a refrigerator. She had seen my name in the ads. I waited but no letter arrived to inform me I was a winner. But being a kid then, I couldn't care less. Candies, "Voltes V" and *taguan pung* were more important to me. Maybe it was someone with the same name or they couldn't locate me. I wasn't sure myself if I wrote the correct address on the stub.

Major loot

Recently my friends began to notice how lucky I am. Here is a rundown of the prizes I've won and how I did it:

1. A Swatch watch from Cosmopolitan. I wrote Cosmo, thanking them for featuring women with jobs to die for, saying it made me realize how important it was to pursue a job that one truly loved. My sincerity must have impressed them. My letter was chosen letter of the month, and I won a silver Swatch, which I love!

2. P600 for being Food Magazine's Readers' Best for February. My creation was a hot and spicy beef chili Mexicali soup. I described how this would perk up my friends' mood every time we're feeling blue.

I also made another food entry for my Dad: the chicken fingers he cooks for his *apo*, Polo, whenever they play together. He won, too. His recipe even landed on the cover with an accompanying picture of them both.

3. Two collector's item pager from Coke's "Always on Time" contest. This is where you have to spot the ATM Coke sign in different shows. Even though my friends and I were embarrassed to death getting Coke cans and wrappers from deserted tables (sometimes not) in malls, we were dead set on winning. I sent colorful envelopes and wrote "Pick Me!" and things like that. I put my entries in different drop boxes to improve my chances—all 30 of them. I got a letter informing me I won. But Coke didn't send me another one when I won again. I only learned about it when a woman whom I met at the Coke office (she herself won a pager) called to inform me that she saw my name again in the newspapers. (What can I say, I'm a friendly gal, giving my phone number away.)

4. George Michael's double CD from Channel V. I just clicked on their contest page, chose the CD I wanted and submitted my name. Did this three times. When I claimed my CD at a post office in Manila, I had to "donate" P30 for the employee's merienda. If I didn't look like a college freshman, I could have been asked P500 for my package.

5. A Nikon Novus camera from MTV. When I was in Subic two summers ago, I saw this girl with her oh-so-tiny camera. I'd have one like that someday, I told myself. So when I saw VJ Sonia Couling hawking a tiny camera for a contest, I immediately e-mailed my entry. I just named the camera and sent a drawing of a skeleton that said, "This could be you waiting for Mr. Right." I explained that the same thing shouldn't happen when you are looking for the perfect camera since Nikon has it. Monette Sison, a former editorial assistant of Sunday Inquirer Magazine was the one who e-mailed me that I won. She had seen my name on MTV.

When I claimed my prize from the Nikon dealer in Quezon City, I was required to pose with the manager. When the picture came out, the manager said he must have been the winner because I looked so embarrassed.

When I met MTV's Sudhanshu Sarronwala, I personally thanked him. Great conversation piece during our interview.

6. Pillow and mug from Channel 2's "Kaybol." Every show, they flashed a question and you paged in your answer. The question that day was: "What's the best *japorms* on a rainy day?" If you didn't want to win, you can send very predictable answers like "jacket" or "boots." Since I belong to the 2 percent of our population whose ideas are out this world, I answered: "A colorful bathing suit with matching umbrella hat."

7. P50 for The Most Embarrassing Graduation Experience from Meg Magazine. I related how my high school grad pics were exposed and how my hat was bending sideways in all of the pics that were developed. The prize was inconsequential, but it was fun remembering those funny moments.

Gratitude

Why do I always win? Is it because I have so much time in my hands, my timing is perfect, or I am just darn lucky?

I remember that when I was in fourth grade, I won a mug and bag during the school fair. My teacher told me that was because I was good and she predictd that that when I grew up, I would be lucky. Prophetic words indeed.

I really have no secret. I just tell myself that I will win and repeat it incessantly. But not to the point of obsessing or offering dead chickens every full moon. Positive thinking is certainly powerful. I couldn't care less what statisticians say about the chances of winning being one in a million.

People are sometimes so cynical that they don't win. They preempt their chances by thinking so negatively.

My family and friends are surprised and excited whenever I win. I'm glad I give them hope which makes them interested in joining contests. My sister won a Fila bag and shirt in a TV contest. Same also with my Dad. My friend Odie won a cell phone from a video rental store.

I have learned that I have a way of weaving words into prize-winning entries. Although I haven't won a house and lot, a BMW or a trip to Disneyland, I am thankful for my little wins.

My advice: If you have the time, what have you got to lose in trying? There are so many opportunities out their: TV, magazines, newspapers, radio, the Internet. Don't join all contests and spend hundreds to qualify. Just choose the contest you want. (I have positive vibes for the contests I join.) Let your mind work, get on with your life but pray like anything!

But if I'm so darn lucky, why do I not try the big leagues, like the lotto? I am working on it. But if I do win, forgive me if I don't write about it.

Ma. Lalaine B. Reyes, 26, rewards herself with her favorite Calbee potato chips whenever she wins. A certified workaholic, she relaxes by cooking, traveling and baby-sitting her hyper nephews, Polo and Chase.

Notice to Youngblood contributors

Contributors to Youngblood who haven't received their checks are requested to inquire with the PDI cashier on Friday.

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Unity

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FOR ONE year at least, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo proposed last Monday, let everyone drop his sword and pick up the ploughshare. Well, she didn't quite put it that way, her speechwriters were not so given to metaphors. What she did say was that for one year at least the politicians may wish to drop their propensity for bickering and unite to pluck the country out of the fire.

Well, I myself wouldn't mind if the senators and congressmen would stop showing themselves to be so obsessed with personal ambition and self-interest and show a little more concern for the country. Shortly before the President delivered her State of the Nation Address, the Senate and the House were in the throes of voting for the Senate president and speaker, and truly the levels of bickering and acrimony were enough to inspire anyone to cry, like the Prince of Verona, "A plague on both your houses!"

I like Frank Drilon, but I cannot applaud the compromises he made to get the Senate presidency. One would imagine that he would have clung a little longer to the lofty ground he had occupied a few months ago by his fine performance in the impeachment trial. To have gone so high and fall so low in so short a time! Ah, but different people have different priorities. Or different valuation of things: most people would not call getting the Senate presidency, by whatever means, a fall. I would.

And though I like Nene Pimentel, I cannot applaud too the compromises he made during the previous administration, compromises that have tarnished his hitherto heroic image as a fighter against tyranny. Of course, his joining Erap's camp assured him of not being a victim again of *dagdag-bawas*, and indeed of getting the Senate presidency. But I don't know that he wasn't better off protesting the injustice done to him outside the halls of the Senate, and vowing to banish *dagdag-bawas* from the face of the earth. Right now, I don't know what he is bitter about.

As to Congress, the acrimony might have been less there, but for the representatives to make Joe de Venecia, a man who keeps adding new dimensions to the word *trapo* (resilience is the newest of them) speaker of the House again, well, that speaks volumes about the quality of their minds.

If this is the kind of politics Ms Macapagal wants the politicians to take a break from for at least one year, I'm all for it. Though while at this, it can't possibly bolster her credibility there that she, the President, was right in the thick of all that political maneuvering or "politicking" in the legislature, making deals, pulling strings, making sure she would get her allies to lead both houses. While of course trying not to openly antagonize anyone (she was for Drilon, but not "publicly"), which is the hallmark of her own brand of politics. Easy to call for peace and unity after waging all the wars and coming out on top.

But even if it were possible, and even if Ms Macapagal were the best person to propose it, I don't know that ceasing hostilities is something we ought to find desirable at all. There are dissensions and dissensions, there are disagreements and disagreements, there are disunities and disunities. It is one thing to differ on the basis of self-interest, it is another to differ on the basis of principle. The one is politicking, the other is principled disagreement. The one is bickering, the other is protesting. And though they are not always so clearly demarcated—principle has been known to be a refuge of scoundrels—there is a line between them.

It is one thing to vote for or against a bill or an issue on party lines, it is another to do so on the strength of convictions. Etta Rosales and Wigberto Tañada typified the second—and it is a testament to our politics that Rosales remains outside Congress' *kulambo*, and Tañada has had the Senate door slammed on him. Most everybody else in Congress typifies the first.

Why should dissension, disagreement and disunity be naturally bad?

Why should protest and objection and remonstration be naturally negative? Why shouldn't the senators and representatives protest and object and remonstrate against policies that are pro-business and anti-poor? Why shouldn't the senators and representatives dissent and disagree and take exception to wrongdoing in public office? They would be betraying public trust if they did not.

While at this, that was a remarkable explanation Mike Arroyo gave for why he and Bing Rodrigo traded accusations of bribery. It was a "misunderstanding between friends," he said. He must walk in very strange circles to have friendships like that. I have misunderstandings with journalist friends, too. But I do not accuse them and they do not accuse me of taking bribes—least of all, a P50 million one—when we make *tampo* with each other. Quite incidentally, someone told me in an e-mail that Ms Macapagal vetoed the bill anyway, so no harm has been done. If I attempted to murder him but unfortunately failed, would he consider me to not have done him harm?

Why should the senators and congressmen not protest something like this? Why should they show their unity by joining a conspiracy of silence? Why should they draw ranks with government to commit iniquity?

By all means let us declare a moratorium on politicking, on voting for or against bills on the basis of loyalty to party (or the fear of it, which is more common), of opposing for the sake of opposing, or for the sake of advancing oneself by bringing the other fellow down. If we can, let us abolish them forever. But let us never stop, or take a respite from, protesting iniquity, from dissenting with injustice, from diverging from the wrong path. Democracy is based on vigilance, not acquiescence. Progress is based on the unity of the just, not the unity of scoundrels.

Erap also called for unity during his time, except that he did not suggest one year but a lifetime. If we had listened to him, Ms Macapagal would not be there at all.

* * *

Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com

Trying hard

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

LET'S face it: Ate Glo had serious image problems during her first six months in office. One of my graduate students summarized it succinctly: "She tries to be Erap and Nora Aunor but she's neither Erap nor Nora."

How terribly true. When people tell me about her latest threat to "pulverize" the Abu Sayyaf ("*Pupulbusin ko kayo*"), I imagine her bringing out a compact to dab powder on the faces of the wicked *bandidos*. And when she switches to a Nora routine, she seems to model herself after the Nora of the film "Himala," eyes raised to heaven. She in fact invokes God a bit too often: "Let's pray." "Let's leave it to God." When she inaugurated a Philip Morris cigarette plant in Batangas, she just had to tell the town's residents that the factory was from God as well.

(Philip Morris probably agrees with Ate Glo about its being God's gift to humanity. It has a study claiming that it had saved the Czech government $147 million in 1997, an amount calculated from the savings the government will have because of the number of Czechs who die prematurely from smoking and will no longer need retirement benefits!)

Ate Glo's spin doctors try too hard. There is, for example, this terrible weekly propaganda documentary on government television called "The Working President," the title clearly intended to contrast her with a presumably non-working predecessor. Even worse is this other program (I can't even remember what it's called) which features First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's mercy missions to the poor. Ate Glo's spin doctors should know better. Propaganda just doesn't work in the 21st century—it's crude, it's boring, it insults people's intelligence and, worst of all, it squanders taxpayers' money which could go into creating those jobs Ate Glo promised in her State of the Nation Address (Sona).

Ah, the Sona. Another opportunity for a spin job. It wasn't too bad. The speech itself had the usual rhetoric, but then people do need buzzwords to remember: jobs, homes, education, food. There were some reasonable and concrete targets, for example cutting back the red tape from housing permits from 188 to 45. (Okay, okay, so that's still 45 permits but Ate Glo isn't a miracle worker, notwithstanding her "Himala" demeanor.)

Ate Glo's spin doctors may have tried too hard when they brought out Jayson, Jomar and Erwin, three kids from the urban poor settlement in Payatas. Ms Macapagal explained that the three had sent letters of appeal to her in the form of paper boats, supposedly floating them down the Pasig River. Jayson asked for a chance to finish college, Jomar a permanent job for his father and Erwin for the government to close down Payatas and give the people land.

Filipinos are a sentimental lot, but the paper boats story became the object of ridicule. Sen. Edgardo Angara promptly used the paper boats as a metaphor for the country: "sinkable, *walang direksyon*." One television anchor tersely commented that it wasn't clear how the paper boats made it to Malacañang through the Pasig River's garbage. (Actually, the boats didn't survive the Pasig but Ate Glo got photocopies of the kids' letters from the NGO that sponsored the activity.)

I am amazed Ate Glo agreed to this rerun of President Ramos' Mang Pandoy gimmick. Back in 1992, Ramos paraded Mang Pandoy, also from an urban poor community, as someone who would be lifted out of poverty as a result of his presidency. But we know Mang Pandoy's life did not improve: he did odd jobs for Ramos but became jobless after Ramos left Malacañang.

I am sure Ate Glo meant it when she promised the boys that she wouldn't let them down. One company has already offered Jayson a college scholarship and I wouldn't be surprised if someone else came up offering a job for Jomar's father. But all this smacks of noblesse oblige, a sense that the rich should occasionally do something for the poor. At best, noblesse oblige is patronizing but more often it becomes offensively condescending, with an implicit message that the poor would be lost without the rich's benevolence.

The three boys raise serious questions about Ate Glo's style of governance. Is she capable of going beyond charity? Is she ready to tackle the structural issues? For starters, what will she do about Erwin's appeal to close down Payatas? Erwin reminds us that it has been more than a year since the Payatas landslide killed at least 150 people (we will never know the actual number since there are still unretrieved bodies). Erwin himself lost a brother, uncles and aunts in that disaster. What will government do now?

If Ate Glo wants a more effective "gimmick" then she should find an Aling Panching or, better still, several Aling Panchings and set them up with self-help schemes. Instead of one-shot doles, she should demonstrate what micro-financing schemes can do. Extend out small loans to several of these Aling Panchings. Our women are famous for stretching the peso, getting small investments rolling to feed their families. An Aling Panching would be able to deliver results by next year's Sona, proving the poor can move forward, without doles. Get the women to talk at next year's Sona about how they battled against all odds, including good-for-nothing husbands like Mang Pandoy, to keep their families surviving.

Yes, Ate Glo tries hard, maybe too hard. It's time she be herself, a leader with a good heart, ready to listen and, more importantly, to learn from the country's poor. As for image-building, I think that if Ate Glo would just forget about the 2004 elections, she'd probably boost her chances of winning when the elections do come around.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org

LETTERS

'Dagdag presyo, bawas serbisyo'

WE, of the Freedom from Debt Coalition strongly oppose Maynilad's petition for a water rate increase of P5 per cubic meter.

First, we find Maynilad's proposed water rate hike totally unacceptable. Maynilad's creative presentation of its data through TV and print advertisements that intend to condition the public's mind on its proposed increase is highly deceptive. Maynilad would have us believe that its one-half centavo per liter rate increase has a negligible effect on the pockets of consumers. According to them, the increase would translate into a mere P20 or a pack of cigarettes for the urban poor. For the "middle class," the increase would simply mean P85 or a movie ticket.

The value of money for Maynilad's PR agents and officials is obviously different from that of the ordinary consumers. To ordinary households consuming 30 cubic meters, P85 is already transportation money for three schoolchildren. To the vendor selling cigarettes in the streets, this amount is already a day's income. To the urban poor family who can only afford the poor's staple food, "instant noodles," this means forgoing their meals for two days.

There is another thing that Maynilad's deceptive advertisements do not say. That is, the one-half centavo per liter increase that it is asking from us adds up to billions and billions of pesos for it. In short, Maynilad wants to make big money out of little people. If the rate hike was so inconsequential, then why is Maynilad going around the concession agreement just to have the increase approved?

Furthermore, Maynilad has not even justified the water rate increase that it deems so small. It has yet to show the numbers and the basis for the P5 rate increase.

Beyond the amount of the proposed rate increase, we reject Maynilad's petition because it violates the 1997 concession agreement between the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and Maynilad.

The agreement states that actual losses incurred by Maynilad should be recovered throughout the life span of the contract. This means that the justifiable losses of Maynilad must be recovered over the remaining life of the contract or 21 years. However, Maynilad wants to go around the agreement and trick the consumers by proposing the recovery of its so-called losses in a short period of one and a half years or 18 months.

The FDC maintains that the extraordinary price adjustment (EPA) allowed by the concession agreement is a sufficient mechanism that Maynilad should use for its proposed price increase. Whatever increase Maynilad wants should go through the EPA process. The EPA process was precisely designed because of the nature of the business that Maynilad is in. Providing quality water and expanding water services require long-term capital. Maynilad's participation in the bidding process, which it eventually won, meant that it was willing to put in big capital and that it understood that this capital could not be immediately recovered. Maynilad's petition for the acceleration of the recovery of its losses, therefore contradicts the spirit and principle of the contract.

The P5 rate increase does not guarantee improved and expanded services. On the contrary, Maynilad even intends to scale down its performance targets. Along with its petition for a rates increase, Maynilad is also asking for the postponement of its service obligations. In other words, *dagdag presyo, bawas serbisyo*.

Overall, we find Maynilad's petition for a water rate increase deceptive, illegal and unjust. Maynilad should take responsibility for its business decisions and should not compel consumers to cover its losses.

We warn the Regulatory Office, led by Chief Regulator Rex Tantiongco, from giving in to the unacceptable demands of Maynilad. As a government entity, the Regulatory Office should ensure that Maynilad doesn't succeed in cheating on the concession agreement and in swindling the consumers.—**MA. TERESA DIOKNO-PASCUAL, president, Freedom from Debt Coalition, 34 Matiaga St., Central District, Quezon City**

Marriage based on love endures

CONRADO de Quiros wrote in his July 16, 2001 column: "Where I stand, or lie down, the only sacred thing in marriage is that man and wife love each other. That is gone, and there is nothing sacred in it. There's just a piece of paper signed by a minor clerk in city hall or a priest who was in a hurry to perform the next sacrament to improve his income."

A piece of paper—that's what this whole debate on divorce boils down to. The problem is that marriage is not seen as something holy, permanent and indissoluble anymore. It is not seen as something worth fighting for. If the love is gone, then let's shake hands, say goodbye and move on. Divorce is the answer to marital woes—or so they think.

Philosopher Alice von Hildebrand once said that "a mediocre view of marriage leads to a mediocre marriage—and mediocrity dooms marriage." She added: "Only extremely high ideals about marriage will enable couples to get through the hard times. When the sea is rough, it's doubly important for the captain to keep his eyes fixed on the lighthouse marking the safe harbor. The beauty and greatness of marriage should be your constant beacon, precisely because you're still so far from the shore."

What's happening, though, is quite the opposite. We've developed such a shabby view of marriage—as can be seen from the opinion that marriage is just a piece of paper—so it's no wonder that divorce seems to be the most reasonable solution to an age-old quandary.

Yet, could it not be that the problem is not marriage itself? Could it not be that the problem lies in the fact that we do not know what love is and we do not know how to love as we should?

"When love is gone..." four words which make me think, and think a lot. What kind of love is here now but gone tomorrow? It does not sound like love at all. Isn't love, the very idea of it, unconditional and for always? Otherwise it wouldn't be love. It may be a momentary high, a temporary shot of happiness or some fleeting pleasure. But not love.

True love endures. It lasts longer than a battery because it is more than a feeling. It is a choice. It is an act of the will and not the result of emotions. Thus, it can persist despite and in spite of one's feelings or moods. Love doesn't just suddenly die. There had been, prior to its "death," many little choices of selfishness, ego and pride. Real love knows how to pardon and at the same time, seeks pardon. It bears wrongs patiently and overlooks the shortcomings of others. It understands, encourages and builds.

Which brings me back to my point: If in marriage, love dies, could it be that the problem lies not with marriage itself as an institution but rather in that we do not love as we should?

And if we do not know how to love, how in the world can divorce resolve this? By giving us a second chance? Or a third? Or a fourth?

If the problem is not marriage but love, why change the rules of marriage? Wouldn't it be more effective to change the way we love?

Clearly, with the move for the divorce bill, we are barking up the wrong tree.—**STEPHANIE OLIVARES, Muntinlupa City**

Vendors' subculture in Quiapo

I FIND it difficult to walk through the streets of Quiapo because of the numerous vendors on the sidewalks and at times in the middle of the streets. When I walk on Evangelista, Quezon Boulevard, P. Paterno and Esperanza, it is impossible not to notice these vendors with their portable tables and chairs, offering an infinite variety of goods.

At first, I thought these vendors were disorganized, even chaotic. But of course I was wrong. In fact, these Quiapo vendors have developed their own *modus vivendi* which most of us may not quite understand. They have formed a subculture.

These people trying to earn a living by using the space provided for the public can already be described as a social organization. They have a hierarchy and they have a way of recruiting members. No one can just decide to sell there.

How can this subculture be formed amid the chaotic environment of Quiapo? An in-depth sociological study was made by Patrick Azanza of the University of the Philippines in Diliman some years back on these vendors. In his study titled, "Subculture of Ambulant Vendors in Quiapo," three major points were presented as to the existence of this subculture:

- Socialization of the vendors and the continuous support to the norms they developed. The members of this so-called social organization were brought together by several factors: family orientation, friendly relations, geographic linkages and religious affiliation. Those who become members were usually recruited on the basis of these indicators. Also, over time, these ambulant vendors have developed certain languages, symbols and rules that each must respect so everyone can receive benefits. Examples are: their sense of territoriality, competition while cooperating in other matters such as protecting each other from getting arrested and *pakikisama*.
- Public support. There are many people who patronize them with the thought of getting the most for their money. I saw a lot of buyers in Quiapo, some looking for goods sold in malls but sold cheaper there, others looking for products that can only be found in Quiapo. A few women were trying to take a peek at their future, while *devotos* were buying religious paraphernalia. These vendors somehow continue to exist because they have gained public support over the years.
- Failure of the police to implement laws (yes, they do occupy public space). Public property should not be used for private purposes, according to Article 424 of the Civil Code. But as Azanza put it, we have "flawed police services." Vendors give protection money to avoid being arrested. They have their own ways of informing one another about impending raids. These vendors unite to save their only source of income.

These people cannot be seen as a problem, or as something apart from our community. This underground economy is already blended into Filipino society. These vendors make Quiapo, Quiapo.—**GERRMAI ABELLA, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City**

People need affordable health services

ON THE OCCASION of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's first State of the Nation Address, the Health Alliance for Democracy (HEAD), an alliance of health organizations, professionals, students and hospital workers, raises its alert call: expensive health care services kill. It calls on the President to increase the national health budget to make health services affordable and accessible to all Filipinos.

Today, 8 out of every 10 Filipinos cannot afford the health care they need. Medical treatment is simply out of reach to the majority of Filipinos despite new technologies and medical breakthroughs. Most cannot even afford adequate food, shelter and clothing for their families.

Health services at government hospitals are now practically for sale. Government hospitals have implemented the fee-for-service scheme and have increased hospital fees by at least 20 percent. The average hospital bill is three times the average monthly wage of an ordinary Filipino. Even the prices of medicines in the Philippines is 18 times those in India and Canada where citizens have higher incomes than Filipinos.

With massive impoverishment and no economic relief in sight, the moral imperative to stop the commercialization of health services and the corporatization of public hospitals is urgent. The Macapagal administration's concern for the *masa* and the entire Filipino people should be manifested through the allocation of 5 percent of the gross national product to the national health budget. This will make health services affordable and accessible to all Filipinos.—**DR. JOSEPH CARABEO, secretary general, Health Alliance for Democracy, 233 Mayon cor. N. Roxas Sts., Quezon City**

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The WORLD

LUVERNE B. GUECO, EDITOR

Croat Army general surrenders

ADEMI: Not afraid of court

REUTERS

ZAGREB, Croatia—A Croatian Army general flew to the Netherlands yesterday **to surrender to the UN war crimes tribunal and face charges that he oversaw a wartime campaign that killed about 70 Serb civilians and left hundreds of homes in ashes.**

Gen. Rahim Ademi is the first Croat to face accusations stemming from the 1991-95 Serbo-Croat war. One of the more gruesome atrocities involved 10 Croatian soldiers who sprayed an 84-year-old blind woman with gunfire as she sat on the porch of her home, the United Nations alleged in a report.

Wearing his military uniform decorated with medals, Ademi, his wife, Anita, and his lawyer took a regular Croatian Airlines flight to Amsterdam. He was to be taken from Amsterdam's airport to the tribunal in The Hague.

Because he decided to surrender voluntarily, Ademi boarded the flight without handcuffs or a police guard. His two daughters were at the airport to bid him farewell.

"I am proud of my role in the war," he said before he left. "I am not afraid of The Hague court's accusations—I have done nothing wrong in the war and I will prove it there. My conscience is completely clear."

The tribunal indicted Ademi along with another high-ranking Croatian officer and demanded that both suspects be handed over for trial. Croatia's pro-Western government agreed to comply, but its decision triggered fierce protests by veterans and nationalists who supported the late President Franjo Tudjman. They see Croatian fighters as heroes and patriots, not criminals.

Many Croats have struggled to come to grips with the indictments of military leaders they believe saved the country from Serb forces who indiscriminately shelled villages and cities, killed thousands of civilians and expelled many more from their homes.

The second suspect—widely believed to be retired Gen. Ante Gotovina—has indicated a refusal to surrender, and his loyalists have threatened unrest if he is arrested. A warrant has been issued for his arrest, but he remains at large.

Although the tribunal's indictments of the two remain sealed, the charges against Ademi are believed to stem from a 1993 government offensive in southwestern Croatia, an operation aimed at regaining territory seized by Serb rebels during the 1991 independence war.

Under pressure from the West, Croatian troops withdrew from the recaptured territories soon afterward. The United Nations later charged that retreating Croatian forces burned down villages, set hundreds of Serb homes ablaze and killed about 70 Serb civilians in an area known as the Medak pocket. *AP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Atlantis returns

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida—Space shuttle Atlantis swooped through the night sky and touched down smoothly, completing its mission to install a new air lock for spacewalkers at the international space station. The shuttle and its five astronauts landed on the floodlighted runway at Kennedy Space Center late Tuesday after a one-day delay caused by rain. "Boy, did we have a really good flight," astronaut Janet Kavandi said early yesterday after emerging from Atlantis. "It was hard work. It was great work. It was probably the most satisfying thing that I've ever done," added James Reilly II, who took part in the mission's three spacewalks. The space station and its three residents were soaring high above the Atlantic when the shuttle ended its 13-day, 8 million-kilometer journey. The clouds were high and sparse and there was no rain around. A line of showers had prevented the shuttle from landing Tuesday morning. It was only the 18th space shuttle touchdown in darkness in 20 years. Infrared cameras showed the incoming spaceship as a ghostly white blur from as far out as 113 km. *AP*

Profile of Chandra

WASHINGTON—The FBI plans to sit down with Rep. Gary Condit to create a profile of Chandra Levy as it seeks a fresh approach to cracking the mystery surrounding the former federal intern's disappearance three months ago. Lawyers for Condit, a California Democrat, agreed Tuesday for their client to speak with FBI profilers after a new agent assigned to the case offered to do it without questions from local police, according to sources familiar with the FBI's contact with the congressman. The sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the session could occur as early as this week, depending on Condit's schedule. The sources said the FBI told Condit's lawyers they intended to conduct the session without Washington police present. City police have interviewed Condit three times and recently expressed interest in a fourth interview with him. A police source said Condit, 53 and married, said in his third interview with police that he had an affair with the 24-year-old former intern. He has denied any role in her disappearance and, according to his lead lawyer, passed a lie detector test administered by a former FBI expert hired by the Condit team. *AP*

Priest's disclosure

NEW YORK—A man jailed 12 years for murder was freed after a priest testified that another man had confessed to the crime long ago. US District Judge Denny Chin threw out Jose Morales' conviction Tuesday and released him without bail. "I feel good," Morales said as he left the courthouse. Prosecutors said they would fight to reinstate the conviction. Morales, 31, was found guilty in 1988 of beating and stabbing to death Jose Antonio Rivera in the South Bronx neighborhood of New York City. At a hearing last week, the Rev. Joseph Towle testified that another neighborhood gang member, Jesus Fornes, had told him in 1989 that he and two other people—but not Morales—were involved in the slaying. *AP*

Human cloning

WASHINGTON—The US House judiciary committee has approved a bill that would prohibit human cloning, following a lengthy debate that also delved into stem cell research. In passing the bill Tuesday, lawmakers said they wanted to keep scientists from applying the same technique on humans that was used to clone Dolly the sheep in 1997. The measure, approved 18-11, now goes before the full House of Representatives. Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson praised the committee, saying its action puts Congress on the right track toward prohibiting the cloning of human beings. *AP*

In good spirits

RAMA, Ontario—Ringo Starr said Tuesday that fellow former Beatle George Harrison was in good spirits the last time they were together, and that he probably would have been notified if Harrison was near death. "I saw him three weeks ago and he's doing great," Starr told a news conference at Casino Rama, an entertainment complex 100 km north of Toronto where Starr's latest band begins a North American tour this week. "He has had an operation, we can't deny that," Starr said of Harrison, who recently was treated for a brain tumor. "He's recouping and his spirits were high. That's all I have to say on it." On Monday, Harrison and his wife Olivia rejected a London newspaper report that he was close to death. The report attributed the information to former Beatles producer George Martin. *AP*

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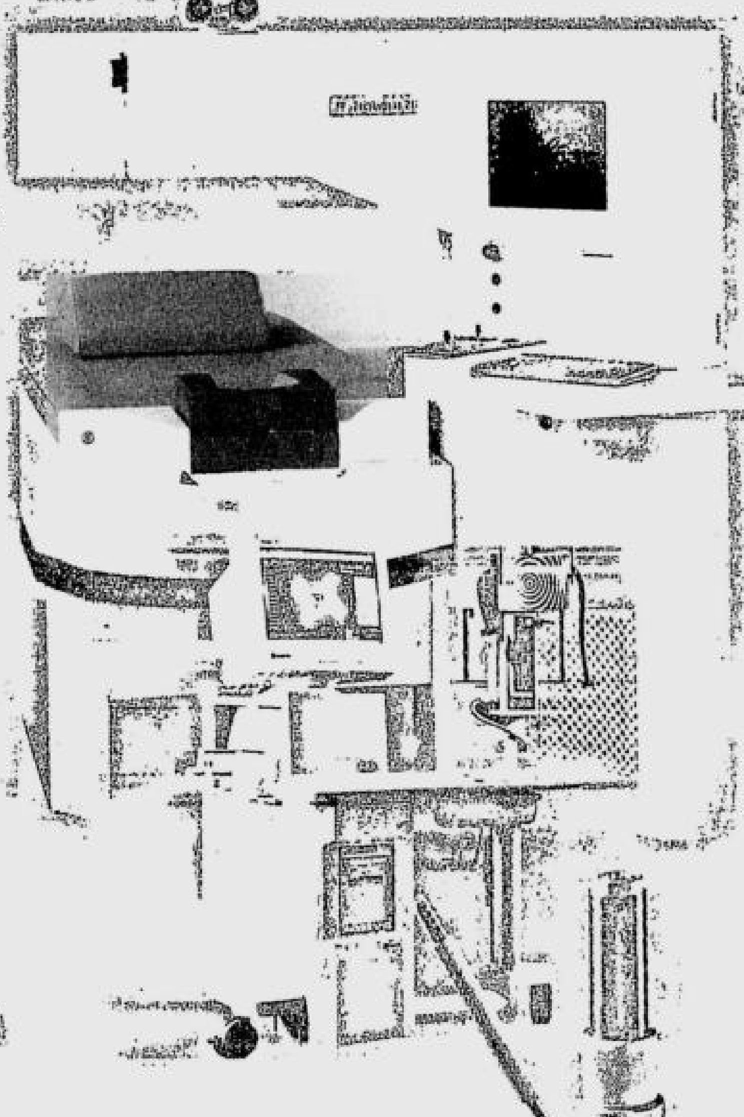

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Taiwan cuts pay of foreign workers

TAIPEI—Taiwan is going to make foreign labor cheaper for local industries amid a domestic slowdown by reducing their monthly wage by 16 percent from September, officials said yesterday.

"Foreign workers will have NT$2,500 (US$71.68) deducted from their monthly wage as payment for room and board, but they will be compensated by paying less fees to manpower brokers," said the Cabinet Secretary General Chiou I-jen.

The current minimum wage for foreign workers in Taiwan is NT$15,840 a month, but the actual cost for employers often runs up to as much as NT$20,000 with room and board added, according to the Council of Labor Affairs.

Chiou said Taiwan was currently in talks with Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam on the issue and they had in principle agreed to the wage reduction in exchange for lower brokerage fees to manpower agencies on both sides.

In other words, the brokering fees shouldered by foreign workers will be slashed by NT$6,000 in Taiwan and another NT$6,000 in the country where they come from.

"The wage reduction is expected to be implemented as early as September," a CLA official said.

Taiwanese employers are expected to save as much as NT$824 million a month from the wage reduction, raising concerns that more employers would prefer to hire foreign workers over local ones amid a record jobless rate.

The island's unemployment rate reached an all-time high of 4.51 percent in June as graduates began their search for jobs in the midst of the economic slowdown.

However, the CLA official said the government's efforts to tighten labor imports would prevent further increases in alien workers.

Taiwan is expected to limit the number of foreign domestic helpers allowed in at 120,000 and reduce the number of alien workers in the manufacturing and construction sectors by 15,000 each year in order to create more jobs for local residents, he said.

Foreign workers will also be barred from taking part in the country's new major public projects announced earlier this year, he added.

Taiwan's total population of foreign workers—mostly come from Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam—hit a new record of 329,612 in June, up 812 from May.

The number of foreign domestic helpers rose 1,145 month-on-month to a record of 102,804 in June, but the number of foreign workers in the manufacturing and construction sectors fell 597 to 214,304 over the same period. *AFP*

Typhoon lashes Hong Kong

HONG KONG—The outer edge of Typhoon "Yutu" lashed Hong Kong with gusting winds and rain early yesterday, disrupting transportation by land, sea and air and closing financial markets and other businesses as it churned toward mainland China.

Squalls knocked down several trees, and small chunks of masonry broke off of some old buildings and fell to the ground, smashing car windows.

At least 115 people took refuge in emergency shelters, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or injuries from the second storm to shut down Hong Kong in less than three weeks.

Yutu, which means "jade rabbit" in Mandarin Chinese, was packing maximum winds of 150 kilometers per hour and located about 180 km south-southwest of Hong Kong at noon, the Hong Kong Observatory said.

Winds in Hong Kong gained strength as Yutu moved closer in the late morning, but the storm appeared to be on course to hit the coast of China's Guangdong province southwest of here.

Hong Kong's outlying island of Cheung Chau had winds of 65 kilometers per hour with gusts of up to 115 kilometers per hour and some areas received up to 40 mm of rain in the morning, the observatory said. *AP*

WIPAT Kongmalai (left photo), governor of Suphan Buri province in northern Thailand, and police officers take part in a ritual in front of a pig's head to curse drug traffickers.

REUTERS

General backs idea of 'killer teams' vs pushers

BANGKOK—A police general yesterday denied that special death squads were planning to kill 1,000 drug traffickers this year, and had already sent "350 to hell."

Lt. Gen. Pichai Sunthornsajjabul said he merely supported the idea of "killer teams" to wipe out drug dealers as proposed by a group in the army which he did not name.

The English-language The Nation quoted Pichai as saying police-backed death squads in northeastern Thailand were targeting drug runners for execution and had already killed 350 in an operation dubbed "Shortcut to Hell."

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra yesterday said that "a lot of ideas have come up" to cope with the deluge of narcotics but denied that extra-judicial executions would be used. "We have to consider human rights and rights under the Constitution," he said.

Pichai, who heads the northeast region No. 4, said the 1,000 figure was the number of suspected drug traffickers in his area of command.

"Hundreds of these people were arrested but managed to use the dirty money they gained from the narcotics business to buy their way out from jail," he said. "So the only way to stop the drugs plague is to get rid of them.

"I support the idea of setting up killer teams to terminate these people, provided that there is a law to support such actions of such teams," Pichai said in a telephone interview.

"Hunting in my sense is to search and arrest and send them to court. The police use guns only when suspects open fire on them," he said.

The general said more than 300 such suspects had been killed in drug-related cases in the past four years in his region.

He said his area of responsibility covered 11 provinces with a total population of more than 11 million people.

Trafficking and abuse of narcotics and methamphetamines is regarded a one of Thailand's major problems and Thaksin recently declared an all-out war on drugs. Most of the drugs are smuggled in from neighboring Burma, also known as Myanmar. *AP*

Asean meet clouded by US-China spy row

HANOI—Top diplomats from the United States, China and a collection of Asian and European nations began security talks yesterday clouded by Beijing's convictions of an American and two US residents on spying charges.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell was expected to discuss the spying cases with Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan Wednesday afternoon on the fringes of the Asean Regional Forum, a meeting of the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its 23 "dialogue partners"—including the United States, China, Russia, North and South Korea and the European Union.

The cases also have complicated Powell's trip to Beijing later this week, which had been seen as a chance to smooth relations already roiled by the US spy plane incident, US plans for a missile defense system, and human rights disputes.

Despite the dispute, Thailand's foreign ministry spokesperson, Norachit Sinhaseni, said Asian nations were anticipating an improvement in ties between Beijing and Washington.

"We would like to see the United States and China resume normal diplomatic discussions and that seems to be the direction and we welcome that development very much," Norachit said.

In a statement Tuesday, Asean foreign ministers said stable relations among the major powers, "particularly the US and China," were important to peace in the region.

Both China and the United States play key security roles in the region that claims more than half a billion people and some of the world's most critical sea lanes. The ministers hope to persuade Powell that Washington should keep attention on Southeast Asia even as North Asia consumes more of its diplomatic resources.

Powell assured the group that the Asia-Pacific "is a priority for the new administration," a participant said.

Regarding US relations with China, Powell said the United States "remains engaged and also this is a priority," he said. *AP*

Lewd phones seized

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysian police seized mobile phone covers depicting naked celebrities which lit up certain parts of their bodies when the phone rang, a newspaper reported yesterday.

Raids on sellers of the covers were included in a crackdown on pornography in Seremban, 60 km south of Kuala Lumpur.

The covers, showing nude pictures of Asian movie and pop music stars, sell for between $6.60-13.20.

Covers showing naked pictures of Hollywood stars fetch higher prices.

Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad recently announced a nationwide crackdown on pornographic material, saying he was worried about its effect on society.

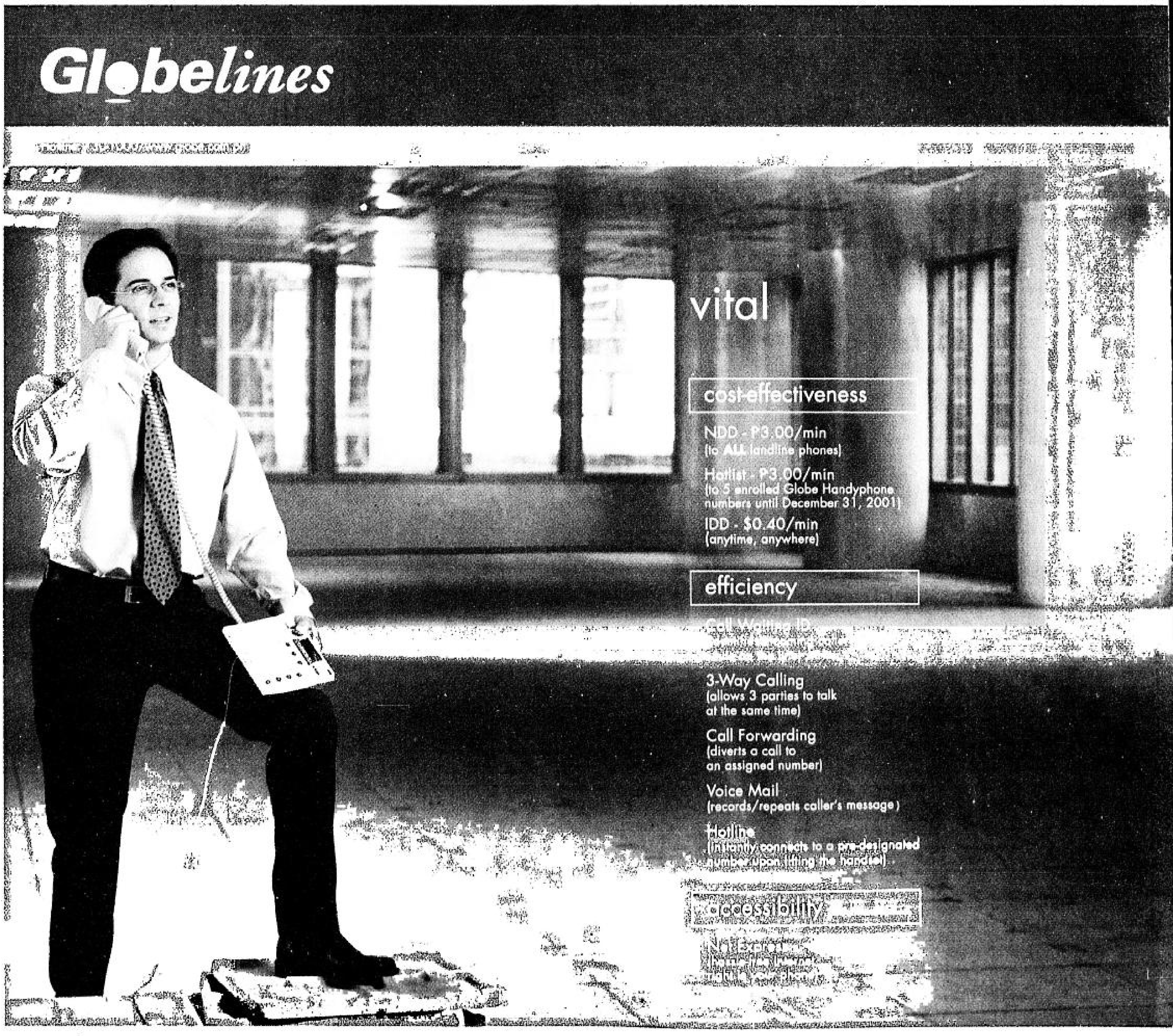
Police said 12 people were arrested and 71 premises raided in Seremban and nearby towns in a seven-day statewide operation that started Monday. *AP*

Anwar hits delaying tactics

KUALA LUMPUR—Jailed politician Anwar Ibrahim's lawyer yesterday accused the Malay-sian government of delaying tactics in his appeal to be allowed overseas for medical treatment.

Sankara Nair said the government had not responded to a demand made more than a month ago to allow Anwar abroad or face legal action.

"We can't apply to the courts unless we have exhausted all avenues of appeal," Sankara told reporters. "But three weeks after acknowledging receipt of our appeal, we have not heard anything from the government." *AP*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(diverts a call to an assigned number)
Voice Mail
(records/repeats caller's message)
Hotline
(instantly connects to a pre-designated number upon lifting the handset)
accessibility

Alien hunters scan heavens for pulses from ET civilizations

LOS ANGELES—Not content to just listen for aliens, a group of California scientists has begun looking for them, too.

For years, the search for extraterrestrial intelligence—commonly known as SETI—has focused on sifting through the radio or microwave transmissions that stream toward Earth from all quarters of the universe. By crunching the data, scientists hope to detect signals generated by alien civilizations.

Now, scientists at the SETI Institute, the University of California's Berkeley and Santa Cruz campuses and the Lick Observatory have expanded their search to include a hunt for fleeting flashes of laser light. Using 102-cm telescope at Lick, they are hunting for pulses as brief as one-billionth of a second that emanate from star systems hundreds of light-years away.

"It's a very long shot, but it's very inexpensive to do," said Frank Drake, the SETI Institute's board chair.

The optical hunt requires use of an existing telescope and about $10,000 worth of equipment. In contrast, the group is building a $26-million array to enhance its search for radio signals.

If the optical project does detect a pulse, it's not clear what meaningful two-way communication could ensue. Laser pulses, traveling at the speed of light, can take hundreds if not thousands of years to travel between the stars.

"If you do get in touch, the conversation is going to be tedious," said Seth Shostak, a SETI Institute astronomer.

The idea of hunting for alien laser pulses has been around for 40 years, or nearly as long as the laser itself. In the United States, teams based at Harvard University, Princeton University, Berkeley and in Columbus, Ohio, are conducting optical searches.

Unlike radio-focused efforts, a successful optical hunt would require catching an alien civilization deliberately targeting Earth with a laser beacon or pulse.

If radio SETI is listening for a shout from an individual in a crowd, its optical counterpart is looking for a subtle wink.

"With radio, generally speaking, signals tend to spread out more—you don't have to target your receiver. With optical receivers, you have to know where the guy is on the other end," Shostak said.

The system installed at the Lick observatory uses three light detectors, called photomultipliers, hooked up to its Nickel Telescope. *AP*

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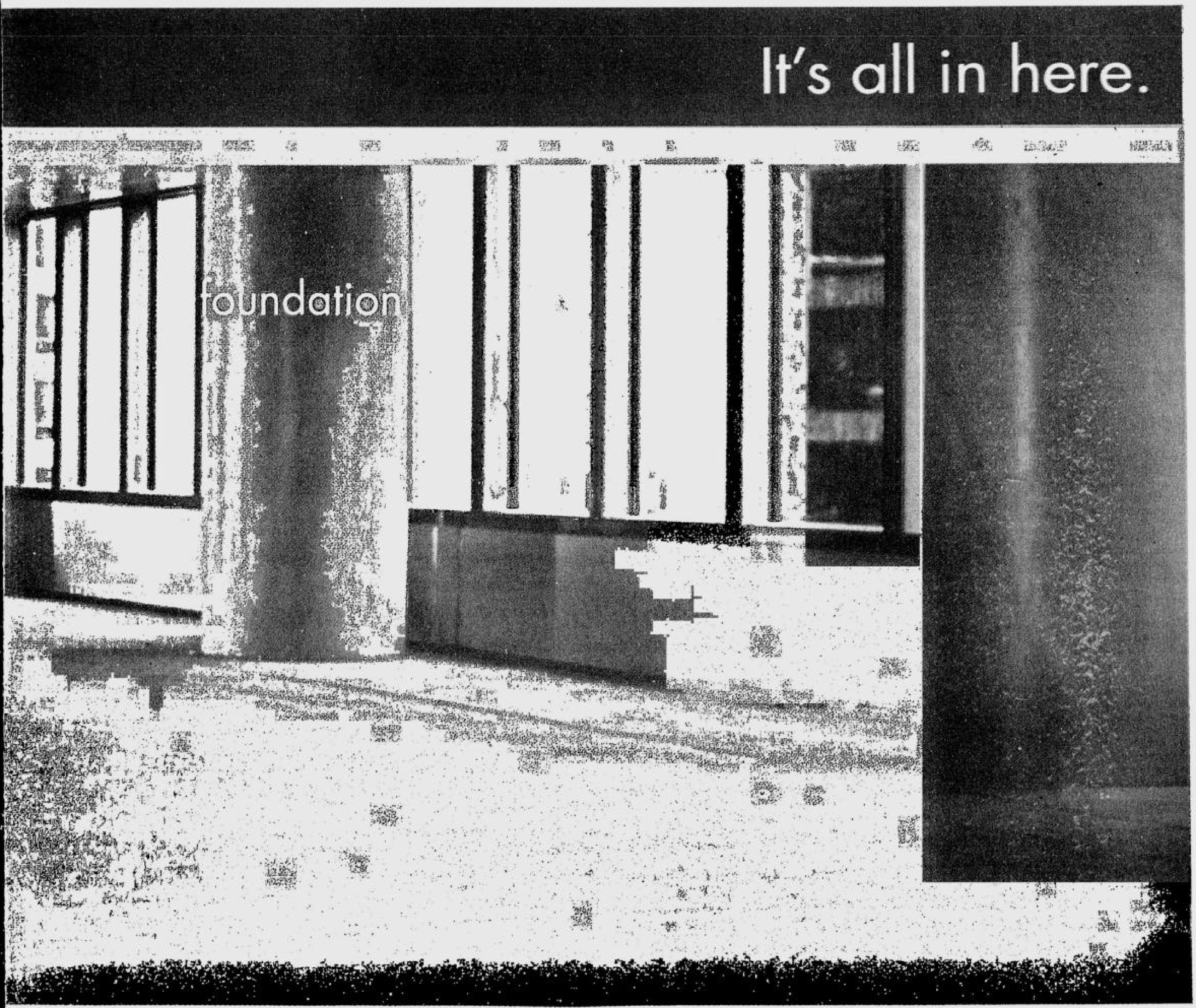

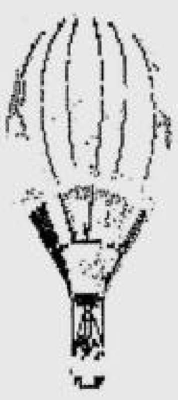

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Across the NATION

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms SOURCE: **PAGASA**

Metro Manila	Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Baguio	Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Laoag	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Calapan	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Bacolod	Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Roxas	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy	Hi 29° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/07/26/01

ROUNDUP

New Dumaguete bishop

DUMAGUETE CITY—Rev. Antonio Franco, Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, has installed Msgr. John Du as the new bishop of the Diocese of Dumaguete. About 40 bishops and 200 priests from all over the country witnessed Du's installation during a Holy Mass on July 18 at the Cathedral Church here. Pope John Paul II approved Bishop Du's appointment to the Dumaguete Diocese on April 21. Du is the third bishop of the Dumaguete Diocese. *Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

For Comelec resolution

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Commission on Elections will soon resolve a petition filed by the Board of Canvassers (BOC) of Tanjay City to nullify the proclamation of Councilor Felix Barot and to instead proclaim Dr. Rolando Tabaloc as the city's 10th councilor. Tanjay Election Supervisor Erlinda Nochefranca said the Comelec ordered the case submitted for resolution after the parties gave their side during a special hearing in Manila. The hearing was called after the Tanjay BOC filed a petition to correct what the board said was an error in the canvassing of votes that resulted in Barot's proclamation. *Alex Pal, PDI Visayas Bureau*

DA consults farmers

NAVAL, Biliran—The Department of Agriculture has launched a consultation program with farmers dubbed the "Sanayan at Talakayang Pang-Agrikultura." At least 200 farmers attended the launching on July 18 at the Capitol here. After the launching, DA personnel discussed how to use organic fertilizers and control pests. Under the program, the DA will consult farmers and discuss with them their concerns every Wednesday until September. *Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

4 killed in bus fall

BACOLOD CITY—Four persons were killed and five others injured on Monday when a cargo truck they were riding in plunged into a 450-foot ravine in San Carlos City, 144 kilometers east of this city. The fatalities were identified as engineer Susan Delima, Felix Ortega, Armi Mar Delima and Renato Nicor. A police report said the victims were on their way to deliver construction materials to the Cabagtasan Elementary School in Barangay Prosperidad, San Carlos City. Truck driver Zaldy Real was negotiating an uphill road in Sitio Ducog-ducog, Barangay Rizal when he lost control of the vehicle. Zaldy and four of his passengers jumped out of the truck as it fell into the ravine. The four others, however, were not as lucky. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

3 slay suspects killed

DAVAO CITY—Police killed three amulet-wearing men suspected to be behind the slaying of a tricycle driver in Matan-ao, Davao del Sur on Sunday. Killed were Silvestre Brocka Jr., Michael Cawas and Bonifacio Fabroa, suspects in the slaying of tricycle driver Ireneo Fernandez, 46, of Dolo, Bansalan. Reports reaching the regional police command here revealed that Fernandez was driving his tricycle on Bonifacio Street in Bansalan when the three men shot and killed him. Responding policemen later killed the assailants. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

P1M in shabu seized

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Police seized at least P1 million worth of shabu from the brother of a Bataan board member in Bacolor town, police reported Tuesday. Intelligence operatives from the provincial and municipal police, led by Supt. Oscar Albayalde, caught Urcino Muli, brother of Bataan board member Federico Muli, in the act of selling a two-gram sachet of shabu to SPO4 Eduardo Bartolo on Monday. Police later discovered at least 750 grams of shabu, packed in seven plastic bags, in Muli's car. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

DOH warns of hepa B

DARAGA, Albay—Officials of the Department of Health in Bicol warned of a possible increase in the number of hepatitis B cases based on tests conducted on blood samples from walk-in donors. The DOH Regional Blood Bank has found hepatitis B to be the most common disease detected in donated blood. The presence of hepatitis B in blood was also the most common reason volunteers were not allowed to donate their blood. Dr. Teresita Plaza, former head of the Regional Blood Bank based here, said prior to her retirement, the blood bank laboratory detected 12 hepatitis B cases out of 100 blood samples. *Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Hatchery inaugurated

PAMPANGA, the No. 1 producer of *tilapia* in the country today, finally got its own provincial fish hatchery with the inauguration of the hatchery at the Pampanga Agriculture College (PAC) grounds in Magalang town recently. Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor and Pampanga Rep. Oscar Rodriguez led ribbon-cutting rites for the P1.95 million structure that will produce quality *tilapia* fingerlings for Central Luzon. The project was made possible through a P1.7 million fund from the provincial government, breeders from the National Freshwater Fisheries Technology Center and P250,000 from the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. The PAC donated the site for the hatchery.

Kidnappers abandon boy as police conduct stakeout

BY KATHY NAVARRO
AND CONNIE FERNANDEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Police yesterday rescued the 11-year-old son of a Chinese-Filipino businessman just two days after he was kidnapped on his way to school.

Ryan James Yu was recovered about 9:15 a.m. inside an apartment on Salinas Drive Extension, Barangay Lahug, less than a kilometer from the area where he was seized on Monday.

Chief Supt. Avelino Razon, police director for Central Visayas, said the kidnappers abandoned the boy after they noticed that policemen were conducting a stakeout in the area.

"The pressure of the police forced (the kidnappers) to abandon the boy . . . even if no ransom was paid," he told reporters yesterday.

Five of the kidnappers' accomplices, who were supposed to get the P1.5-million ransom at the Davao International Airport from the boy's father, were arrested about 4 p.m. yesterday.

Police identified them as Roberto Galope, 46, of General Santos City; Henry Hernandez, 33, and his brother, Efren, 39, of Davao; Jovencio Camado, 30, Davao del Sur; and Edgar Manimo, 24, of Digos City.

Recovered from the suspects were hand grenades, a .38 cal. revolver and a fan knife.

Ryan James, who appeared shaken by his ordeal, was with his mother, Zenia, when he was presented to journalists yesterday afternoon.

He refused to answer questions. The boy has bruises on the cheeks and hands, and a deep cut in the forehead where he was pistol-whipped by one of the kidnappers.

Supt. George Corpuz, head of the Special Task Group (Stag), which was the lead agency in the case, said the kidnappers belong to a gang from Mindanao.

He said the Yu kidnapping was the group's "test case" to determine if they could operate in the Visayas, especially in Cebu.

Motorcycle-riding men kidnapped Ryan James, a Grade 5 pupil of the St. Francis of Assisi School, in Peace Valley, Barangay Lahug, while he and a family helper, Joel Bation, were walking on their way to school about 7 a.m. on Monday.

One of the kidnappers pistol-whipped the boy in the head when he resisted. The victim was unconscious when he was transferred to a waiting white Kia Pride car in Barangay Sudlon, about 100 meters from the site of the abduction.

Contrary to earlier reports, Corpuz said the boy's parents immediately cooperated with the police.

The kidnappers initially demanded a ransom of P50 million. They lowered the amount to P10 million, then to P5 million, and later to P1.5 million.

While the negotiations were going on, Corpuz said the police conducted a stakeout along Kalye Asul after receiving a tip that the white Kia Pride car was spotted in the area.

He added that they also began to suspect that two groups were involved in the operation after tracing calls made by the kidnappers to the parents.

Two of the calls, during which Zenia was able to talk to Ryan James, were traced in Lahug. The rest of the calls, Corpuz said, were made in Davao City.

"The kidnappers wanted to bring the boy to Mindanao. But they cannot pull out because of the police stakeout," Corpuz said.

About 5 a.m. yesterday, the parents agreed that the P1.5-million payoff be made about 3 p.m. at the Davao airport.

But sources said the boy's keepers in Lahug had abandoned the boy as early as 3 a.m. after they felt that the policemen were closing in on them.

About 7 a.m. yesterday, the boy was able to untie himself and tried to go out of the house. A pedicab driver saw him and immediately informed the police.

The policemen went to the apartment and took the boy. Corpuz said they still continued negotiations with the Davao group.

About 1 p.m. yesterday, a group of policemen flew to Davao to entrap the bagmen. At the same time, another team conducted pursuit operations against the Cebu group. *With a report from Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

BUSINESS CLIMATE DENNIS SABANGAN

Where have the buyers gone? These days could be the saddest for this woman trader in Zamboanga City who tends to a stall selling used clothes amid fears that bandits now being pursued by soldiers in Basilan would sow terror in the city, too.

Politicians ride on anti-dengue plans

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Local politicians constantly try to make themselves "look good" in front of their supporters even during a dengue epidemic.

Health officials here revealed that politicians preferred fumigation among various methods to fight dengue fever as "a way of (earning) publicity" because it was visible and noticed by residents.

"*Siyempre, pogi* points. Fogging has become the choice because naturally, these make them more popular," a Nueva Vizcaya health official, who requested anonymity, said.

He said they have received requests for fumigation from town officials as cases of dengue started to rise in their areas in the past months.

According to a report released by the Regional Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (Resu) of the Department of Health here, the number of dengue cases in Cagayan Valley increased by 42 percent from last year's figures.

Latest DOH figures recorded 236 cases of dengue in the region, with Cagayan posting the highest number with 93 cases, including one fatality from Iguig town.

Nueva Vizcaya recorded 70 cases, "more than (the) expected (figure) over the past six years," the Resu report said.

Worst affected by the outbreak were Tuguegarao City in Cagayan and Roxas, Isabela, with 22 cases each; and Bambang and Solano, both in Nueva Vizcaya, with 19 and 14 cases, respectively.

Compared with the incidence in the past six years, dengue fever in the region has become more widespread, according to the DOH, with 162 affected barangays in 57 towns.

Most patients, the DOH report indicated, were babies and children aged 1-9.

With health services crippled by lack of funds, officials said local governments would have to shoulder the fumigation expenses.

A single mixture of a liter of Resigen diluted in 40 liters of diesel fuel costs around P3,400, which is barely enough to cover an area of two town blocks.

But according to Dr. Ferdinand Tolentino, Nueva Vizcaya health officer, "environmental sanitation is still the most effective means (to fight dengue)."

Fogging may not be totally effective against the main carriers of dengue, the *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* mosquitoes, as it only drives the mosquitoes away and into other areas, he said.

"Worse, we get more requests as it triggers envy among residents," Tolentino said.

The regional DOH-Resu said it has alerted its field personnel to intensify the information campaign on how to prevent and control dengue.

"We continue to reiterate to the people that sanitation is still the best measure against dengue and not fogging or spraying," Tolentino said. "Aside from being far less costly, it is a more permanent preventive measure for a dengue epidemic." *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Ex-Bacolod gov not spared from dengue plague

BY CARLA GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A former governor became the latest victim of dengue fever, which has killed three persons and downed more than 400 others in Negros Occidental this year.

Former Gov. Rafael Coscolluela was rushed to the Riverside Medical Center on Monday after his platelet count dropped to 25,000.

On Tuesday afternoon, Coscolluela underwent blood transfusion after his platelet count further decreased to 19,000.

The normal platelet count of a man is 150,000 to 250,000, said Dr. Ernesto Malvas, Negros Occidental health officer.

Malvas said a dengue victim could start bleeding internally or blood could come out of his nose or ears when his platelet count dropped below the normal level.

If a dengue victim is not immediately attended to, he added, he or she could die of shock due to blood loss.

Although Coscolluela has not suffered any bleeding, he said, "the fact remains that laboratory findings shows a decreasing platelet count so we have to be vigilant."

Coscolluela is one of the 190 persons afflicted with dengue fever in Bacolod City in July.

From January to July, 422 dengue cases were reported in the province's 11 cities and 14 towns, records from the Provincial Health Office said.

Of the number, 310 cases were reported in Bacolod.

Three persons have died of the disease. The fatalities were from the cities of Victorias, Bacolod and Kabankalan.

In Silay City, 25 dengue cases have been reported: Kabankalan, 24; Bago, 10; Cadiz, 10; Talisay, 6; Victorias, 5; Sagay, 5; La Carlota, 3; San Carlos, 2; and Himamaylan, 1.

Two cases each were reported in the towns of Binalbagan, Hinigaran, Calatrava, Murcia and Sipalay. One case each was reported in the towns of Cauayan, E.B. Magallona, Isabela, La Castellana, Manapla, Moises Padilla, Pulupandan and San Enrique.

Three cases were reported in Toboso town.

Although the number of cases has increased, Malvas said the disease has not yet reached epidemic proportions in the province.

Malvas said his office was encouraging the public to get rid of possible breeding places of the *Aedes egypti* mosquito in their surroundings and maintain cleanliness in homes and communities.

Among the common breeding places of the dengue-carrying mosquitoes are flower vases, roof gutters, old tires, coconut husks and empty cans and bottles.

Dr. Edileon Isidto, city health officer, said his office had been conducting an education campaign to stop the spread of the disease.

411 Lucena City workers dismissed

LUCENA CITY—The city government has dismissed 411 of its more than 700 casual employees to rid itself of excess workers.

"This is a very hard decision but I have to do it as part of the total rehabilitation of the government workforce," Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. told City Hall workers, most of whom have temporary appointments.

A partial list of names of 118 terminated employees was posted in front of the City Hall building.

Talaga said the personnel services of the city government are now "over and above the limit."

The city has no savings to augment funds for personal services, he added.

To ease the effects of the retrenchment on the other employees, the casual workers will be put on rotation.

The first half will work during the third quarter of the year, while the other half will work in the last quarter, Talaga said.

City administrator Lenny Papa-Medua told employees in a meeting later that only 300 casual employees would be accommodated under this scheme.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Illegal loggers used storm for cover

BY CRISTINA ARZADON
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAOAG CITY—A multi-agency task force was formed to investigate reports that illegal logging may have aggravated erosion on a mountain slope in an eastern town causing the uprooting of hundreds of trees when Typhoon "Feria" hit Ilocos Norte.

The agency's goal is to validate suspicions that illegally cut logs were mixed with uprooted trees when floods swept these down a mountainside in Sitio Nabasan in Nueva Era town and emptied these into the Bongo River.

The river straddles the towns of Banna, Marcos and Nueva Era.

Headed by the provincial board's committees on environment and laws, the team will work with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Philippine National Police and the affected towns.

The team is scheduled to conduct an aerial survey of a mountain where the trees were supposedly uprooted to determine where they came from and whether landslides or erosion might have caused the trees to be swept away.

It will also try to recover the logs to be kept as government property and used later to repair damaged school buildings in the province.

The board appeared to be unimpressed with a DENR finding saying the trees that swamped the river were uprooted, contrary to the belief that some might have been previously cut.

Based on a July 16 report, Romeo Angay, DENR community development officer, described the trees, with an estimated volume of 100.6 cubic meters in Banna alone, as "uprooted."

Angay said they based their findings after an inspection of some 10.06 cubic meters of trees or 10 percent of the total number of trees that drifted along the river.

"We have yet to inspect the source of the trees due to inaccessible roads," Angay told the INQUIRER.

He said he and his men were only able to reach the Ilocos Norte-Abra Road leading to Sitio Nabasan or three kilometers from the supposed erosion site.

On Monday, the board called DENR officials and witnesses, including media representatives, to present what they actually saw when they surveyed the river.

Elpidio Fabian, provincial environment and natural resources officer, supported Angay's report that the trees might have been uprooted when rainwater seeped into the ground soil, causing either a landslide or erosion.

Other witnesses, however, said some trees came in the form of logs, indicating that the branches and roots were no longer attached to the trunk.

Fabian, after the board's intense grilling, later admitted that some trees might have been cut even before the typhoon struck.

"But that (assumption) is within the context that the trees were not found in the area where they were uprooted. Some appeared to have been previously cut because farmers have started cutting them into pieces," he said.

Sayyaf keeping hostages in 2 Basilan villages

LAMITAN, Basilan—Seven hostages of the Abu Sayyaf were sighted in Barangays Danit and Puntukan here over the weekend.

But Col. Pedro Cesar Ramboanga, chief of the 102nd Army Brigade, could not identify the hostages.

Bandit leader Abu Ahmad Salayyudin, alias Abu Sabaya, is still keeping 21 hostages in the villages.

Ramboanga said Sabaya was with his two sub-commanders, Suhod Tanajalin and Satar Yacob.

Maj. Charlie Galvez, 1st Scout Ranger Battalion commander, said Tanajalin was seriously wounded in a clash with government soldiers.

"He cannot walk because he was hit in the leg and in the left arm," he said.

Galvez said three bodies of suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits had been recovered.

Government soldiers also recovered a firearm after the clash.

Ramboanga said Sabaya's group split into three, "one engaging our Rangers in Danit and Puntukan, the other group was seen in Barangays Limbopas and Linungan and the third went up to Camanburingan in Tipo-tipo town."

Ramboanga said that based on intelligence reports, the seven hostages appeared to be "very weak."

Meanwhile, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, who visited Basilan on Tuesday, welcomed the creation of a 150-member Barangay Volunteer Brigade in Barangay Tabuk in Isabela City, a known stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf.

Villanueva said the volunteer brigade is "tasked to report and monitor all movements of suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf in the barangay."

Gov. Wahab Akbar and provincial board member Jainal Adjibon initiated the creation of the barangay volunteer brigade.

"With the involvement of society, I do not think that there is any other way but for the endeavor of all those concerned to succeed. (We are) seeing to it that Basilan (will) be finally freed from the tyranny and cruelty of (the) Abu Sayyaf," Villanueva said.

Akbar and Adjibon said members of the civilian brigade were not associated with the Abu Sayyaf.

"So there are no traitors here," Adjibon said.

Akbar said civilian brigades would be organized in other barangays in this province.

In Zamboanga City, alert jail authorities were able to uncover an alleged plot of Abu Sayyaf leader Hector Janjalani to escape from his prison cell on Monday.

Senior Supt. Leopoldo Morante, Bureau of Jail Management and Penology chief for Western Mindanao, said guards who were conducting a routine inspection of the prison cells found cracks on the wall of the cell where Janjalani and 20 other suspected Abu Sayyaf members and supporters are being detained.

Hector is an elder brother of Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani.

"They were trying to test the strength of the structure by way of hitting it with a hard object—the end part of a dumbbell," Morante said.

Morante said he had instructed city jail warden Chief Insp. Miguel Garchitorena to "check the cell of Hector Janjalani every 30 minutes" to prevent any escape. ***Julie Alipala-Inot with reports from Jonathan Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

OVERLOADING, EXCESSIVE FEES

Board stops ferry abuses

SANTA, Ilocos Sur—Following two accidents and complaints of overcharging of fare, the municipal council here on Wednesday passed two ordinances regulating ferry operations on the Abra River below the collapsed Quirino Bridge in Barangay Banaoang.

The two ordinances seek to regulate traffic rules and regulations along the village and the operations of barges and ferryboats. Their approval came as two boats capsized this week because of overloading.

On Tuesday, a boat carrying 11 students of the St. Paul College and the Divine Word College in Vigan City and two operators capsized 15 meters from the riverbank.

All the passengers were saved but some of their personal belongings were lost.

The following day, another boat carrying nine passengers and two operators sank. All of them were rescued.

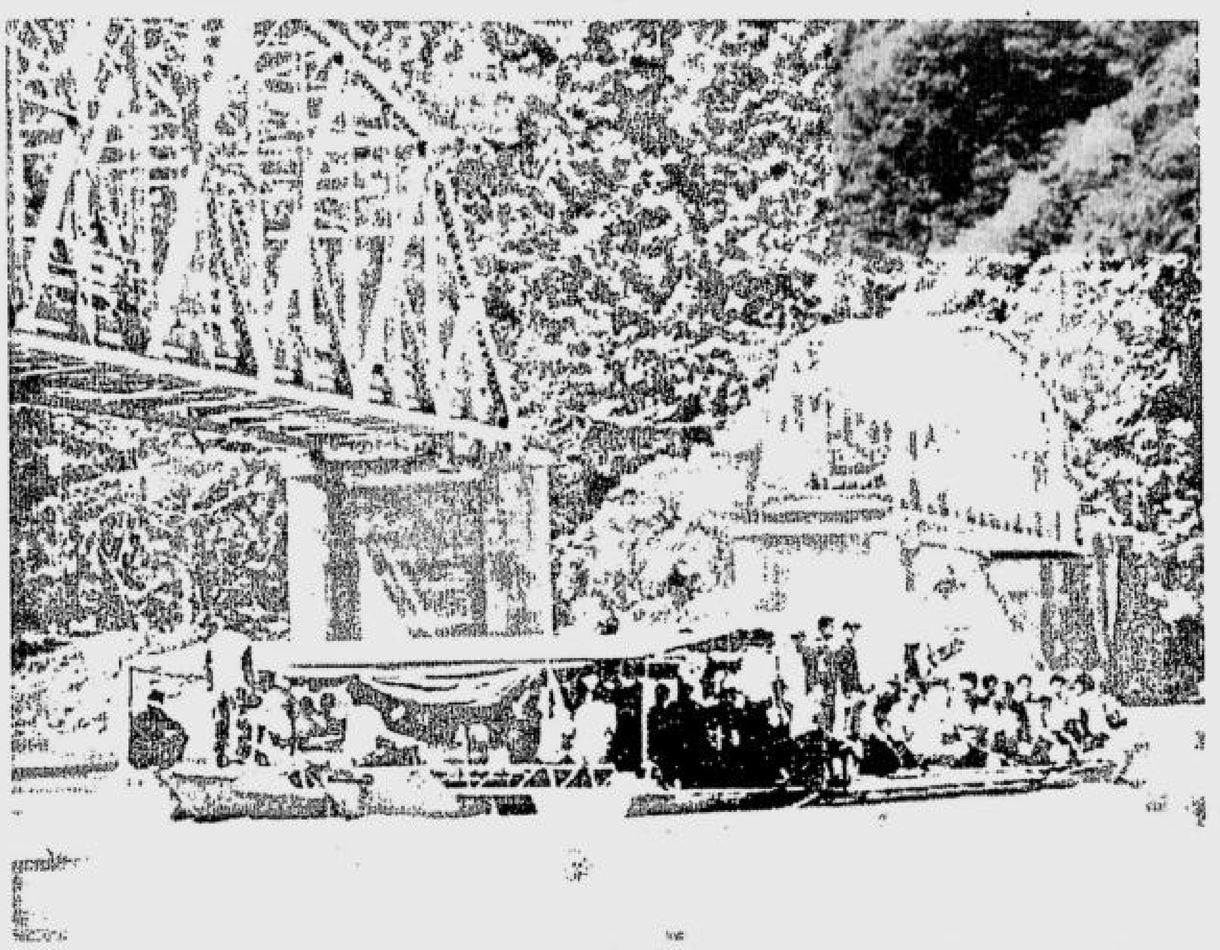
The ordinance prescribes a maximum load of five people for small boats plying the route.

The barges, which usually ferry more than 100 passengers on peak operations, are allowed to carry 100 passengers.

The ordinance also lowers to P75 the P300 fee for light vehicles that are ferried across the river on barges.

Last week, the Ilocos Sur provincial board issued a memorandum that prescribed fare rates but these were not followed by ferry and boat operators.

Mayor Jesus Bueno Jr. said the Santa council decided to legislate and approve the ordinances because the memorandum issued by the provincial board "has no teeth."



CASHING in on disaster, ferry boat operators rake in profits carrying passengers and cargo across the Abra River. LEONCIO BALBIN JR.

The middle span of the Quirino Bridge was wiped out by floodwaters on July 4.

Earlier, Department of Public Works and Highways officials said it would take more than eight months to repair the collapsed portion of the bridge.

But Josefino Rigor, DPWH regional director, said that with a "state-of-the-art" bridge model and President Macapagal-Arroyo's approval, the damaged portion of the bridge could be repaired in about one month.

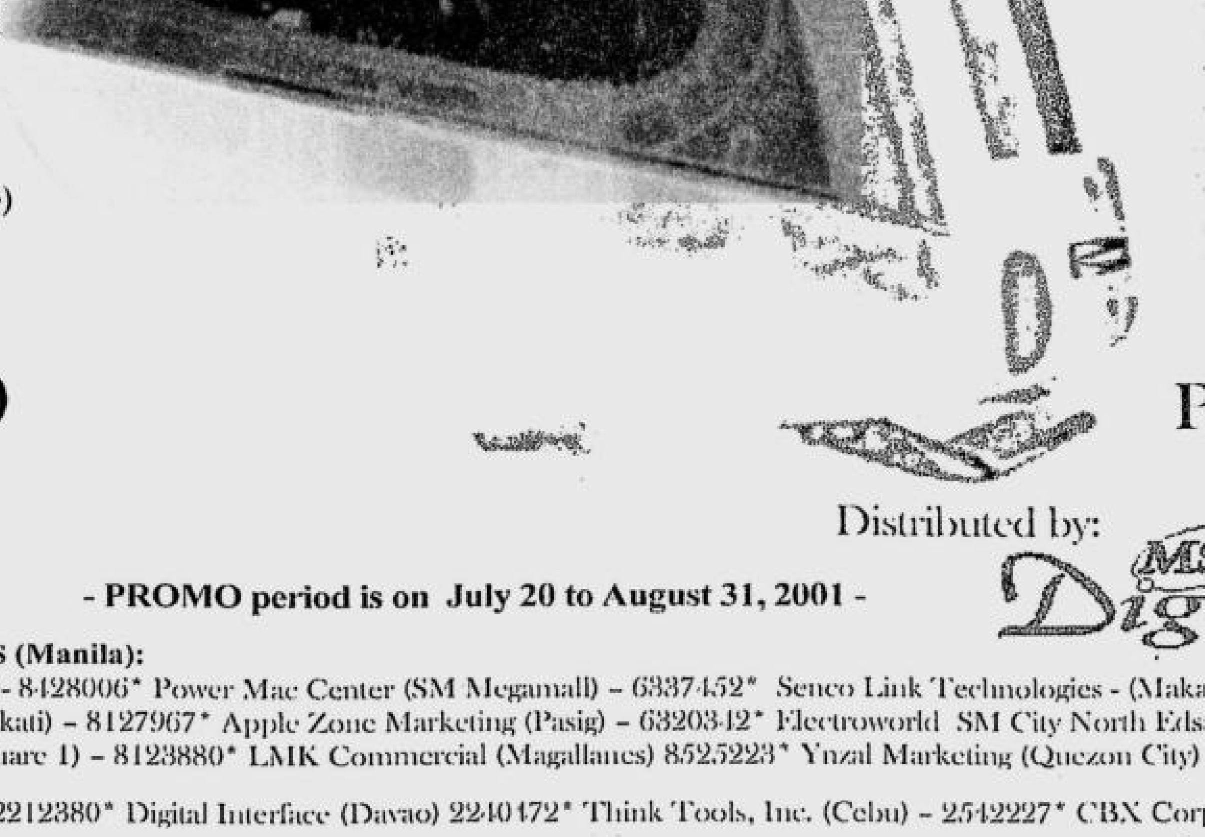
Rigor said they would put up the "Tulay ng Pangulo" on the collapsed portion of the bridge.

Rigor said the DPWH's bureaus of design and construction inspected the Quirino Bridge last week and recommended the use of the "New Waagner Biro Modular Bridge" imported from Austria.

"The maximum (installation phase) would be 25 days," he told the INQUIRER.

The 73.4-meter middle span of the historic bridge collapsed on July 4 at the height of the typhoon. It is a major link to the northern towns of Ilocos Sur, including Vigan, and Ilocos Norte.

Rigor said the "Tulay ng Pangulo" would not need vertical support. He said the new span would be lifted from barges in the Abra River and connected to the undamaged spans. ***Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2338 Series of 2001

Big tax cuts for firms, employees

(From page A1)

posed gross income tax system as a priority measure.

Despite the lower taxes paid by fixed income earners and corporations, the Macapagal administration still expects revenues to go up, according to Tiglao.

He said the proposed tax reforms would eliminate corruption in the BIR and improve tax collection.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has announced that she wanted the BIR and the Bureau of Customs to become showcases of graft-free government agencies.

Tiglao said the President's tax reform program was central to her goal of good governance and economic stability.

5 benefits

In its recommendation, the Department of Finance cited five benefits of the proposed modified gross income tax system.

These include increasing tax collection, simplifying the tax structure and administration, minimizing the discretion of tax examiners, broadening the tax base and making the tax system more equitable.

The DOF said the government could post a "net gain" of P29.64 billion at a 26-percent tax rate for corporations, P6.36 billion at 21 percent and P1.73 billion at 20 percent.

"That's the good news for corporations and professionals. The bit of bad news is that there will be less discretion on the part (of tax examiners) and only very specific deductions (would be allowed.) The reason for this is that a lot of corruption in the BIR has been due to discretion in interpreting these deductions," Tiglao said.

Self-employed

He said the tax rate would similarly be lowered for self-employed individuals because this could result in a more efficient tax collection.

Tiglao said the tax brackets would be reduced from the current seven to four, with those earning P75,000 a year having to pay no taxes at all.

Under the proposal, those earning P75,000 to P149,999 a year would have to pay a tax representing 7 percent of their income; P150,000 to P349,999, 14 percent; P350,000 to P649,999, 21 percent and more than P650,000, 28 percent.

The present tax system has 5 percent for P1 to P9,999; 10 percent for P10,00 to P29,999; 15 percent for P30,000 69,999; 20 percent for P70,000 to P139,999; 25 percent for P140,000 to P249,999; 30 percent for P250,000 to P499,999; and 32 percent for more than P500,000.

Initial loss

But economist Romulo Neri said the BIR may suffer an initial loss of P50 billion.

In the next two years, the BIR's revenue collection may falter as it rids itself of corrupt officers who could be instrumental in the collection of state earnings, according to Neri, a professor at the Asian Institute of Management.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the higher tax collections under the proposed tax system would help fund the programs that the President outlined in her State of the Nation Address (Sona).

Camacho said non-tax earnings and creative borrowings would also finance the projects.

Six steps

In a speech before the Foreign Chamber of Commerce yesterday, Camacho said the finance department had identified six steps to help raise the money to finance the projects that the President had promised in the Sona.

The steps include collecting bigger revenues through the gross income tax system, increasing earnings from non-tax measures like the sale of government assets, prioritizing expenditures and reducing expenses for items like travel and representation.

The finance department will also encourage the private sector to participate in important infrastructure projects, tap the resources of state-run corporations and financial institutions, and resort to creative borrowings like securitization.

Economic manager

Like Camacho, Neri believes the President's commitments could be "realistically financed."

"The President is now acting like an economic manager and not an economist. She has gotten out of the clutches of the economic straitjacket and is now making targets rather than forecasts. And her promises are very sound and doable," Neri said.

Camacho said the foreign business community would be monitoring the progress of the Sona promises.

"Investor confidence will be bolstered only if we are consistent in these efforts," he said.

35 Sona promises to be monitored

(From page A1)

cerned heads of departments and agencies of their responsibility to meet their targets and deadlines as promised by the President.

Of the 35 promises, the Department of Transportation and Communications with five projects has the biggest number of promises to implement.*(See table)*

The Department of Education, Culture and Sports has been committed to deliver on Ms Macapagal's promise to build a schoolbuilding in every barangay, textbooks for Grades 1 to 4 students and textbooks for all first and second year high school students.

Like student's report card

The Housing Urban Development Coordinating Council under Michael T. Defensor, has been tasked to accomplish the following: cut housing permit signatures to only 45, award lots to 150,000 urban families per year and build 50,000 houses for the urban poor—all by the year 2002.

He also said the oversight committee would publish a report on the progress of these promises two weeks before Ms Macapagal's next Sona.

Salceda said the report would be "like a student's report card on each of the 35 commitments, accompanied by bureaucratic excuses or, hopefully, self-promotion."

Salceda said that while Ms Macapagal's Sona was "reasonably specific, doable and time-bounded," she "simply cannot dismiss . . . the overall sense of creeping pessimism over the economy."

DERSTANDING
NIER TECHN
OF DO 24TT
EST OF HO

WHERE foreign investors are concerned, President Macapagal appears to regard them with dreamy eyes. At Clark in Angeles, Pampanga, she witnesses the signing of a letter of intent for the launching of the $6-million Dornier flying boat project. Iren Dornier of Dornier Air Co. and Nick Gitsis of Sea Air Germany shake on it. JOAN BONDOC

15M Filipinos start day with no breakfast

(From page A1)

in Metro Manila as of May 2001 at P8,036.60 for a 26-workday month, or a combined P16,073.23 for a working couple.

An industrial worker, usually the only breadwinner in a poor family where one parent is employed, receives a minimum daily wage of P255 in Metro Manila, the highest rate in a country where wages are determined by regional economic conditions.

In her Sona, Ms Macapagal acknowledged the growing poverty incidence, adding that the number of unemployed has risen to 4 million from 2.5 million four years ago.

She outlined plans for improving agricultural production and giving health, education, housing and livelihood assistance to the poor. She promised 1 million jobs in agriculture, houses for 50,000 urban poor families and a school in every village within a year.

Osias said social conditions could become more difficult if population growth continued to exert pressure on government services.

The country's population grew at a rate of 2.36 percent from 1995 to 2000, faster than the 2.32 percent for the previous five-year period. At this rate, 1.7 million Filipinos are born every year, or three babies every minute.

Osias said health, education and housing needs may be sacrificed in order to meet the more urgent need for food in large families.

Rapid population increase also stifles the growth of national savings, weakening the ability of families to provide the next generation with adequate "human and physical capital," Popcom said.

In a report earlier this year, the agency said population growth would continue to impede economic development if left unchecked.

"Population growth must slow down and economic growth must speed up for the figures to meet and for all Filipinos to have a better standard of living," the agency said.

It's all over: Wahid leaving palace

(From page A1)

Aides and relatives said disappointment and anger had affected Wahid's fragile health.

Former Cabinet Minister Mohammad Mahfud told reporters that Wahid would leave the country with his family and physicians on Thursday and would stay in the United States for about two weeks.

In his first interview since his ouster as Indonesia's President, Wahid predicted a return to military-backed authoritarian rule under his successor, Megawati Sukarnoputri.

He also said he had underestimated his opponents' determination to unseat him through an impeachment hearing.

"I was wrong in my estimates of the politicians' backbone," Wahid said in an interview Wednesday with Associated Press Television News.

During the interview, Wahid did not appear ill or fatigued.

But he confirmed that he would travel to the United States for medical treatment, saying he had irregular blood pressure.

The national assembly dismissed Wahid on Monday. He has refused to leave the white-column mansion, protesting that his removal from office was unconstitutional and that he was still the legal head of state of the world's fourth most populous nation.

But on Wednesday his doctors convinced him to pack his bags.

The trip will give Wahid a face-saving exit after Monday's humiliation when the assembly replaced him in a unanimous vote with Megawati, the daughter of Indonesia's founding President, Sukarno.

As Wahid prepared for his departure, Megawati prayed and gave thanks at the grave of her father in Blitar, a town in East Java.

Wahid, 61, tried to block Monday's impeachment ballot by declaring emergency rule. But that failed when the military refused to obey his order to suspend the legislature.

Wahid is nearly blind and has had two strokes in recent years. He suffers from high blood pressure and diabetes and cannot walk unaided.

His brother and personal physician, Umar Wahid, said the former President would undergo a physical examination at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland.

"We have done intensive checks on his health over the last few days because of the physical, mental and emotional burdens he has been under," Umar said.

Before and during his 21-month presidency, Wahid was treated several times at Johns Hopkins Hospital and at the John A. Moran Eye Center at the University of Utah.

'The old ways'

Wahid said that his political foes would live to regret the decision to depose him.

He said his opponents in the legislature and the armed forces wanted to return to the ways of former dictator Suharto, who ruled with an iron grip for 32 years and was ousted in 1998 amid pro-democracy protests and riots.

"They used the quarrel between the politicians to set up their own rule, which I think will slide little by little to the old ways," Wahid said of the military commanders who were in a state of near-mutiny in the final months of his administration.

"People will react to the return of censorship, to the return of many, many restrictions in their lives," he said.

Angered by Wahid's tentative efforts at reforming the corruption-ridden armed forces, hard-line generals shifted their support to Megawati over the past year.

But Wahid did not condemn the military as a whole, adding that only a few generals supported a return to authoritarianism.

"In the Army, there are many good people as well," he said.

"It's just a handful of people, those hard-liners."

Wahid also said he would have nothing to do with the new administration.

"I will not issue any advice to Megawati. The ouster is illegal and I will have nothing to do with it," he said.

Wahid said his long friendship with Megawati was over.

"She doesn't put the interests of the nation and the country" above her own, he said.

The two were close political allies in their resistance to Suharto's rule, and Wahid's backing enabled Megawati to become Vice President in 1999.

Emha said that after Wahid vacates the palace on Thursday, he would meet his supporters at the National Monument in an adjacent park and then leave for the airport.

But before he goes, Wahid wants authorities to issue him an official eviction notice.

"He's not leaving voluntarily. He still regards himself as President," Emha said.

When Wahid returns to Indonesia he will set up a pro-democracy think tank to be called the Free Human Foundation, Emha said.

Megawati's Cabinet

The national assembly was preparing on Wednesday to elect a new vice president.

The choice will help determine the shape of Megawati's Cabinet, which is to be announced within a few days.

Among the candidates for the powerful deputy's job are Akbar Tandjung, the head of the Golkar Party, which operated for three decades as Suharto's political machine.

Other vice presidential candidates include Hamzah Haz, the leader of the Muslim-based United Development Party, as well as Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Agum Gumelar, each of whom are former Wahid ministers and retired Army generals.

Hours before the vote was scheduled to take place, about 1,500 banner-waving demonstrators rallied outside the legislature in protest.

"We reject all of them because they destroyed our country," said Farid Rizqon, a 32-year-old accountant.

The Golkar Party was widely viewed as the most corrupt institution in Suharto's regime. Indonesia's Supreme Court is currently considering a motion to dissolve the party for campaign financing abuses.

The protesters claimed that Tandjung's election would signal an end to Indonesia's attempts to build democracy and curb corruption.

The military engaged in brutal repression during Suharto's dictatorship, killing and imprisoning thousands of his political opponents.

During Wahid's presidency, it was also accused of numerous human rights abuses in the troubled regions of Aceh, Maluku and Irian Jaya.

It was not immediately clear whether Megawati would attend the assembly's afternoon session.

Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle has not fielded a vice-presidential candidate, and has said that she wanted an all-party Cabinet. *Reports from AP, AFP*

Megawati entry good for RP, says GMA

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri's ascent to power could stabilize Asia and provide "light" in the Philippines' darkening trade prospects with the international community.

"To the extent that it would help to stabilize the region, then it would help the climate of the Philippines," she told reporters at the presidential mansion here.

The President toured Northern Luzon yesterday to monitor rehabilitation work in Baguio, the Ilocos region and the province of Pampanga, which was damaged by typhoon "Feria" last month.

Long criticized for pursuing the country's commitments to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the President said she had started discussing the yet to be established safety nets for the agriculture industry, in a bid to maximize agricultural trade between the Philippines and Australia and the United States.

She said there were good signs that international financial institutions could return to Asia after the peaceful change in leadership in Indonesia.

Ms Macapagal was one of the first heads of state all over the world to congratulate the new Indonesian President. The Philippine Senate yesterday passed a resolution expressing support for Megawati and for Ms Macapagal's stand.

"Many of the investors in Wall Street and other financial capitals look at one region only. They don't differentiate one country from the other," the President said.

She said she expected this week a final report on how local governments intended to reconcile their development agenda with her commitment to expand agro-industry, which she announced Monday in her State of the Nation Address.

The President said officials had begun working on solutions to market access problems and formalizing a new trade policy for agriculture.

"We must start negotiations with other countries to enable the sale of our food products abroad," she said, adding:

"For example, in Australia, the US and Canada, our mangoes are well in demand, but only mangoes from Guimaras., Now, Guimaras was hit by a pest outbreak, and other regions that grow mangoes cannot trade in its place. This is a waste." The President said she intended to develop new trade protocols that would allow other regions in the Philippines to benefit from the same arrangements as Guimaras.

"We must start talks with Canada, and we must encourage the US to speed up its inspection of our regions' mango production," she said.

Ms Macapagal said much of the existing GATT safety nets were providing farmers real cushions against a pre-scheduled tariff reduction to zero by 2005.

She said these safety nets were "people-friendly" in that they considered wide-ranging opposition to multibillion-peso development projects.

"National Irrigation Authority (officials) confirmed yesterday that they allocated P6 million in facilities for the first time in history," the President said.

"They gave us their list, and I advised them that they must never build huge irrigation dams anymore. I want to focus on communal irrigation dams. The biggest dam we have here (in Benguet) is the San Roque multipurpose dam project, but that will be the last," she said, adding that this position was fundamental to the strengthening of Philippine agriculture against global trade.

TELAH CUK
JANGAN M
TETAPI TEG
JADILAH MA

LIKE FATHER, like daughter, the poster reminds as Indon President Megawati Sukarnoputri visits his grave in East Java on Wednesday. REUTERS

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CEBU	5J - 557	Daily	0130	0240	P2,608	P2,049	*P1,999*
	5J - 559	Daily	0500	0610	P2,608	P2,309	
	5J - 561	Daily	0700	0810			
	5J - 563	Daily	0900	1010			
	5J - 565	Daily	1100	1210			
	5J - 567	Daily	1300	1410			
	5J - 569	Daily	1500	1610			
	5J - 571	Daily	1700	1810			
DAVAO	5J - 961	Daily	0430	0610	P3,307	P2,919	*P2,399*
	5J - 963	Daily	1020	1200			
	5J - 965	Daily	1340	1520			
	5J - 967	Daily	1600	1740			
CAGAYAN de ORO	5J - 381	Daily	0510	0635	P3,295	P2,919	*P2,399*
	5J - 383	Daily	0930	1055			
TACLOBAN	5J - 651	Daily	0610	0720	P2,718	P2,419	*P1,999*
	5J - 655	Daily	1210	1320			
	5J - 657	M/T/Th/Sat	1400	1510			
ILOILO	5J - 451	Daily	0505	0605	P2,498	P2,199	*P1,949*
	5J - 455	Daily	0955	1055			
	5J - 457	Daily	1510	1610			
BACOLOD	5J - 473	Mon to Sat	0510	0610	P2,498	P2,199	*P1,949*
	5J - 475	Daily	1000	1100			
	5J - 477	W/F/Sun	1325	1425			
	5J - 479	Daily	1630	1730			
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 851	Daily	0520	0650	P3,295	P2,639	*P2,399*
	5J - 561/431*	M/W/Th/Sat	0700	1000			
ROXAS	5J - 373	Daily	0530	0630	P2,279	P1,979	*P1,799*
DUMAGUETE	5J - 627	Daily	1340	1450	P2,608	P2,309	*P1,999*
KALIBO	5J - 339	Daily	0900	0950	P2,608	P2,309	*P1,999*

*via Cebu

ORIGIN: CEBU

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 558	Daily	0400	0510	P2,608	P2,049	*P1,999*
	5J - 560	Daily	0700	0810	P2,608	P2,309	
	5J - 562	Daily	0900	1010			
	5J - 564	Daily	1100	1210			
	5J - 566	Daily	1300	1410			
	5J - 568	Daily	1500	1610			
	5J - 570	Daily	1700	1810			
	5J - 572	Daily	1900	2010			
DAVAO	5J - 593	Daily	0800	0850	P2,339	P2,039	*P1,799*
	5J - 597	M/W/F	1420	1510			
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 431	M/W/Th/Sat	0905	1000	P2,388	P2,089	*P1,799*
ILOILO	5J - 164	Daily	1725	1800	P1,799	P1,599	*P1,499*
BACOLOD	5J - 126	Mon to Sat	0810	0840	P1,599	P1,399	*P1,299*

ORIGIN: DAVAO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 962	Daily	0720	0900	P3,307	P2,919	*P2,399*
	5J - 964	Daily	1240	1420			
	5J - 966	Daily	1600	1740			
	5J - 968	Daily	1820	2000			
CEBU	5J - 594	Daily	0930	1020	P2,339	P2,039	*P1,799*
	5J - 598	M/W/F	1550	1640			
ILOILO	5J - 598/164*	M/W/F	1550	1800	P3,295	P2,839	*P2,549*
ZAMBOANGA	5J - 393	T/F/Sun	0910	1010	P2,388	P2,089	*P1,799*

*via Cebu

ORIGIN: CAGAYAN DE ORO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 382	Daily	0715	0840	P3,295	P2,919	*P2,399*
	5J - 384	Daily	1135	1300			

ORIGIN: TACLOBAN

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 652	Daily	0800	0910	P2,718	P2,419	*P1,999*
	5J - 656	Daily	1400	1510			
	5J - 658	M/T/Th/Sat	1550	1700			

ORIGIN: ILOILO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 456	Daily	1135	1235	P2,498	P2,199	*P1,949*
	5J - 458	Daily	1650	1750			
	5J - 462	Daily	1900	2000			
CEBU	5J - 161	Daily	0645	0720	P1,799	P1,599	*P1,499*
DAVAO	5J - 161/593*	Daily	0645	0850	P3,295	P2,839	*P2,549*

*via Cebu

ORIGIN: BACOLOD

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 474	Mon to Sat	0930	1030	P2,498	P2,199	*P1,949*
	5J - 476	Daily	1150	1250			
	5J - 478	W/F/Sun	1515	1615			
	5J - 480	Daily	1820	1920			
CEBU	5J - 125	Mon to Sat	0700	0730	P1,599	P1,399	*P1,299*

ORIGIN: ZAMBOANGA

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 852	Daily	1050	1220	P3,295	P2,639	*P2,399*
	5J - 432/562*	M/W/Th/Sat	0730	1010			
CEBU	5J - 432	M/W/Th/Sat	0730	0825	P2,388	P2,089	*P1,799*
DAVAO	5J - 394	T/FSun	0730	0830	P2,388	P2,089	*P1,799*

*via Cebu

ORIGIN: ROXAS

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 374	Daily	0710	0810	P2,279	P1,979	*P1,799*

ORIGIN: DUMAGUETE

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 628	Daily	1530	1640	P2,608	P2,309	*P1,999*

ORIGIN: KALIBO

DESTINATION	FLT NO.	FREQ.	ETD	ETA	ONE-WAY FARES		
					NORMAL	VALUE	2-DAY ADVANCE PURCHASE
MANILA	5J - 340	Daily	1030	1120	P2,608	P2,309	*P1,999*

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Someone 'very, very close' took a bribe

(From page A1)

veal (who accepted the money) as it was someone very, very close to me," Ms Macapagal said in an interview with GMA-7.

"Who is that person who is very close to me?" the President said in Filipino. "If that someone was very close to me, why did he or she have to go through Bing?"

Asked who Evangelista was, presidential spokesperson Tiglao said: "He's close to Ms Rodrigo but it's a personal relationship I can't comment on." He added that Evangelista was not a Palace official.

Rodrigo "was being blamed for sitting on the documents which is why the vetoed bill was not recalled," the President said she was told.

When Rodrigo last week accused First Gentleman Mike Arroyo of accepting money in exchange for promising that the veto would be rescinded, Ms Macapagal said the former secretary had resigned to take care of her child. At the time, the President made no mention of knowing that the resignation had anything to do with the vetoed clearinghouse franchise.

Bye, Mike

When Mike Arroyo left Tuesday night for a two-week vacation in the United States, he and his wife expressed the same wish that the press lay off the issue of the alleged bribe.

"Everything to be said has been said already. Just refer to previous radio interviews," Ms Macapagal told reporters at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, where she was seeing her husband off on a 10 p.m. Philippine Airlines flight for San Francisco.

But opposition senators, who are set on launching a congressional inquiry, claim that the scandal is an indication of how bad the situation is under the Macapagal administration, and will not let the matter rest.

The President continued to welcome the possible inquiry into Rodrigo's allegations, while defending Arroyo.

For his part, her sad, troubled-looking husband dismissed speculations that he was flying to America to dodge the upcoming Senate inquiry.

"I'll be back on the sixth (of August) to answer charges. Don't worry," he told a horde of reporters on his way to the airline tube. He later apologized to the press for not having enough time to answer their queries.

"I want to rest. My back aches every now and then," added the First Gentleman, who injured his back in a helicopter crash in Mountain Province in 1989. He was later confined to a hospital bed for a month.

GOODBYE to "dreamboat." The President sees off her husband Mr. Mike Arroyo on Tuesday night who left for a two-week US vacation in the midst of allegations that he accepted a P50-million bribe. ROGER MARGALLO

Back, golf, cough

Tiglao also said that Arroyo was scheduled for medical checkup on a slipped disc. Arroyo has also said that he is tired and wants to visit relatives and play some golf. He has also said he would get medical attention for a cough.

Tiglao cleared the First Gentleman of any wrongdoing, adding that Arroyo was prepared to face the allegations.

"The First Gentleman will confront any accuser in a legitimate venue and again we would like to repeat the President's statement that the First Gentleman had not committed any instance of bribe (sic)," Tiglao said.

The issue, he said, was that the company reportedly owned by Dichaves wanted a franchise despite the opposition of the Department of Transportation and Communications.

"The President has not overridden her veto," Tiglao pointed out.

Opposition Sona

In an opposition version of the State of the Nation Address (Sona), Sen. Edgardo Angara said opposition legislators would keep a close eye on Arroyo.

"So much rhetoric has been made in the Sona. But talk is cheap. We are now watching—as the whole nation is—how the Mike Arroyo-Bing Rodrigo story unfolds," Angara said in his 17-page speech.

Earlier, Angara said senators would subpoena Arroyo to explain his side in an investigation.

After his speech, Angara told the INQUIRER that the scandal has "knocked down one of the four pillars of (President Macapagal-Arroyo's) government—morality." He enumerated the President's four pillars: free enterprise, social bias, agricultural modernization and morality.

"It rings hollow now," Angara said of the "morality pillar."

He said that Rodrigo, a "childhood friend" of the President, had no reason to "fabricate" the story.

If the President has given her Cabinet a deadline to improve its performance, she should also give herself a month to investigate her husband, Angara suggested.

"This nation really is riding in a paper *banca*. Unless this government spells out a clear direction, that *banca* can go nowhere but sink," he said.

One year of peace

Opposition congressmen, too, seemed determined to get to the bottom of the matter, although one, Makati Rep. Agapito Aquino, said he would give Ms Macapagal the breathing room she asked for in her Sona.

"One year of peace, that's what I am giving her," said Aquino as he refused to comment on the Arroyo scandal.

But Laban Rep. Constantino Jaraula (Cagayan de Oro) said he would file resolution seeking a formal investigation into Rodrigo's allegations.

"This is a serious matter that we should not ignore because in our effort to help the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the administration itself must be able to show credibility," Jaraula said.

Another opposition solon, Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, said he would co-author Jaraula's resolution.

Jaraula and Remulla said that while the President vowed to eradicate corruption in government, she skirted the issue involving her husband.

"We were wondering why she did not make any reference to any private individual who may be tied up with higher officials and who may have committed corruption," Jaraula said.

He said a formal investigation would "set the record straight and give all parties in the controversy the opportunity to clarify the issue."

For his part, Ombudsman Aniano Desierto said his office "will not investigate him (Arroyo) because he is not a public official."

Desierto added, however, that "if there is a formal complaint, we will investigate . . . but to initiate it on the basis alone of a report against a private citizen is difficult."

He added that his office would wait for the results of a Senate investigation before making its own move.

Background

Evangelista told the President that Rodrigo was dragged into the controversy after the secretary accompanied a friend to Presidential Legislative Liaison Office chief Gabriel Claudio to determine the status of the request to recall the veto.

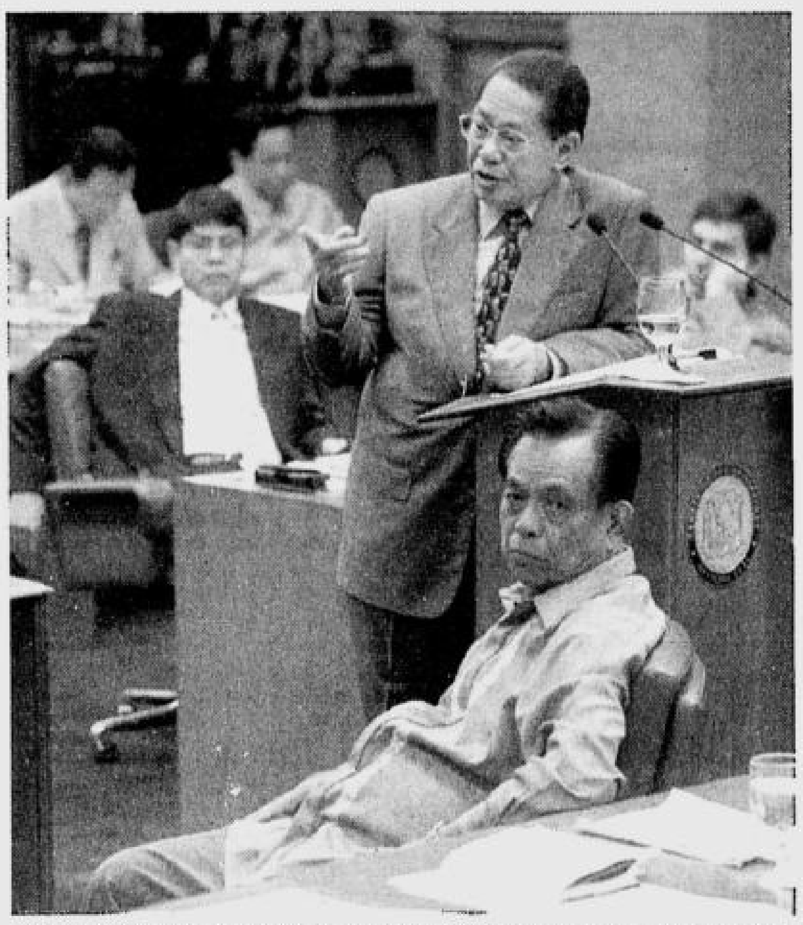
Rodrigo, in an earlier interview, said she had once accompanied a woman named Malou Nuñez to Claudio's office to follow up on the request.

Ms Macapagal vetoed the bill, which was filed on July 24 last year, because it would impose an additional burden on the country's telecom firms, which would have to pay a toll to interconnect through the clearinghouse.

Rodrigo accused Arroyo and three others, whom she did not name, of receiving money in exchange for promising to get the veto rescinded, and of using her as a scapegoat when the deal fell through.

Earlier reports, based only on text messages, said that the amount involved was P50 million. Rodrigo herself has not specified a figure, except to imply that it was a large amount of money.

Rodrigo, an elementary and high school classmate of the President's, said she resigned from her post after learning that Arroyo accused an unnamed ex-Palace secretary of receiving bribe money in a July 17 radio interview. ***With reports from Rocky Nazareno, Alcuin Papa***



THE STATE of the opposition: Sen. Edgardo Angara delivering a counter-Sona speech and a glum-looking Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. DENNIS SABANGAN

Paper boats . . .

(From page A1)

in her State of the Nation Address (Sona) Monday has kicked up a storm, with opposition leaders and other critics accusing her of lying.

Ms Macapagal began her speech on Monday by recounting how three children living at the Payatas dump had written her letters containing their wish lists, which they then folded into paper boats in hopes they would reach Malacañang.

Senate Minority Floor Leader Edgardo Angara hit out at the "parable of the paper boat," telling reporters "it is not credible. Even (if used) as a figure of speech, it should at least have a ring of truth."

Even INQUIRER columnist Neal Cruz thundered in his column yesterday: "That story is a tall tale . . . A paper boat can stay afloat no more than five minutes. It immediately soaks up water and sinks."

Apparently, neither had read an article by INQUIRER reporter Christian Esguerra published on July 9, headlined "Payatas children send out ships of hope to President." A photo of the launching also appeared on the July 9 front page of the Manila Standard.

The INQUIRER reported that three children—Jayson Vann Banogan, 10, Erwin Dolera, 8, and Jomar Pabalan, 10—were among several children who wrote letters to the President, folded them into boats. These were launched down the Pasig at the Aciete Extension in Sta. Mesa, Manila, some 400 meters upriver from Malacañang.

All the children had lost relatives when a mountain of garbage collapsed and killed more than 300 people in July last year.

The three boys interviewed by the INQUIRER were the same three whom Ms Macapagal presented when she delivered her Sona before Congress to personalize the plight of the poor.

On Monday night, Ms Macapagal clarified that she did not actually see the paper boats.

"They really wrote the letter and it's true that they made a paper boat. They floated it on the Pasig in hopes it would reach Malacañang. But it did not reach us. I just read about it in the papers," she told local television.

The Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (Kadamay), the group that organized the letter-writing event on July 8, the anniversary of the Payatas tragedy, did so hoping that the children's wish lists would "touch the heart" of the President.

The group got 23 Payatas children to write the letters and float them down the Pasig in a "symbolic" gesture, said Oliver Ortega of Kadamay.

Missing the point

Ortega said those who insisted that the boats could not have reached the President had missed the point.

"Of course, it's impossible. But the point is, the President got the message through the newspapers," he said. Only the INQUIRER published the story.

Instead of arguing about whether the paper boats could have reached the Palace, opposition senators should give the government a chance to fulfill its promises, Ortega said.

"Our fingers are crossed because we don't want the children to be another Mang Pandoy," he added, referring to a squatter who was used as a symbol of the poor under the Ramos administration. Mang Pandoy, despite several opportunities offered by the government, is as poor today as ever.

"We're hoping that the children's lives will be better, and more importantly, the life of every Filipino," Ortega said.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday that Ms Macapagal had used the story in a figurative sense.

She "seized on that symbolism because the government also believes that the country's future rests on the youth," Tiglao told Radio Mindanao Network.

Esguerra, 22, the reporter who wrote the July 9 article, said he was surprised to see the President present the three boys he had interviewed during her nationally televised Sona.

"I didn't think the message would reach her," he said. "I thought that if it did, she would ignore it."

Which just proves, if nothing else, that the President at least reads the papers. ***With reports from Christian Esguerra, AFP***

Kidnappings rise; gang boss nabbed

(From page A1)

Group, said Armando Avila alias Tata, alleged leader of the Nonoy Avila gang, was seized Tuesday evening in Barangay Kararayan, Naga City.

It was the apprehension of Avila's getaway driver Nito Libradilla alias Toto last Sunday in Bagong Silang, Kalookan City, that reportedly led to the gang leader's arrest.

Gualberto said the gang was behind the 1998 abduction of the owners of the Goodah Food House chain in Quezon City and of the Goodies Mami House in Valenzuela City.

He declined to identify the victims, saying they had requested not to be named and also refused the PNP's invitation for them to confront Avila and Libradilla.

In Cebu City, 11-year-old Ryan James Yu was released yesterday by his abductors. He was the latest victim of kidnapping-for-ransom gangs preying mostly on wealthy Chinese-Filipino families. ***(See story on Page A10.)***

A PNP source said that the owner of the Goodah Food House chain was able to escape his kidnappers, and that no ransom was paid. But the owner of the Goodies Mami House was released supposedly only after his family paid a P2-million ransom.

"These two kidnappings were kept secret during the previous administration," the source said without elaborating.

Avila and Libradilla were presented by the CIDG to PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza and Interior Secretary Jose Lina in Camp Crame.

The two men are said to be ex-members of the Cavite-based Mike Brillantes gang, which is engaged in kidnapping, murder, car theft and other crimes in that province as well as in Laguna and other Southern Tagalog provinces.

Gualberto said their arrests were covered by warrants for crimes imputed to them during their stint in the Mike Brillantes gang.

'Make no mistake'

Mendoza said the 90-day deadline was issued to the PNP during the July 12 meeting of the National Peace and Order Council.

This means that the PNP has until Oct. 12 to fulfill this mission, but Lina said the President had extended the deadline up to the end of the year.

"Make no mistake. The crackdown against lawless elements of our society, especially kidnap-for-ransom groups, will further intensify," Lina said.

Mendoza said the crime wave could be part of the supposed continuing efforts to destabilize the Macapagal administration.

"This is one matter being looked into," he said. "As you know, crime is always related to politics."

But he added that the PNP had no concrete evidence yet to link crime activities to parties seeking to unsettle the administration.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, who spoke at the opening ceremonies of the seminar being attended by anti-crime units of both the PNP and the Armed Forces, said the administration was bent on neutralizing kidnapping gangs.

"We intend to crush kidnappers not by violating human rights but by good police work," he said.

Perez chairs the newly formed National Anti-Crime Commission (NACC)—the government's response to the rising crime rates.

Referring to the practice of forcibly extracting confessions from crime suspects, Perez said it was time to focus on real investigative work to resolve cases.

"The days of beating up suspects to make them confess to crimes they did not commit are over. That is not the way it should be done," he said in Taglish.

He recalled that in the past, he decided to defend certain persons simply because they were tortured into admitting to crimes.

"We will respect human rights. Whoever is being charged should be charged because there is evidence," he said.

In an interview, Perez said no standard operating procedure was governing authorities confronted with cases of kidnapping.

14 in Metro

At the formal opening yesterday of a seven-day seminar in Camp Crame on the investigation of kidnapping and other heinous crimes, Managuelod said the number of abduction cases in Metro Manila rose to 14 in the first half of the year.

In contrast, he said, there were only three such cases recorded during the same period last year. He did not cite any reason for the upsurge.

The Associated Press quoted Managuelod as saying: "We are not satisfied with our performance. The government is not, and nobody is.

"We must now send the message that kidnappers cannot survive the ferocity of our war against them."

Perez told the INQUIRER that the NACC was scheduled to meet for the first time yesterday, to come up with its own implementing rules and guidelines.

These will be submitted to the President for approval, he said.

The members of the NACC are: three representatives of the private sector; the defense and interior secretaries; the national security adviser; the chiefs of the PNP and AFP; the director of the National Bureau of Investigation; and the chief state prosecutor of the Department of Justice.

It takes only 30 minutes…

(From page A1)

nonsmokers," study author Ryo Otsuka wrote in this week's issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

An editorial in the journal pointed out that cigarettes posed a risk of heart disease, as well as cancer, for smokers and nonsmokers alike.

But a cigarette manufacturer claimed otherwise.

Seth Moskowitz, spokesperson for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., said the study does not change the company's belief that there is no scientific evidence establishing that secondhand smoke is a risk factor for lung cancer, heart disease or any other disease in adult nonsmokers.

In the Japanese study, Osaka City University Medical School researchers used blood pressure tests and an imaging technique called echocardiography to examine the effect on the heart arteries' ability to dilute. Measurements were taken before and after exposure to secondhand smoke.

Tobacco smoke appeared to impair the functioning of the endothelium, a lining of cells in the arteries that helps regulate dilation.

Scientists believe that coronary artery disease may begin when the endothelium is damaged, leaving the arteries prone to blockages or narrowing.

"This change may be one reason why passive smoking is a risk factor for cardiac disease" and related deaths in nonsmokers, the researchers said.

Reversible

The study did not examine whether the changes from the one-time exposure to smoke were permanent.

But previous research among smokers had found similar changes that may be reversible if smokers quit, said Dr. David Faxon, president of the American Heart Association.

If exposure continues, "gradually, as hardening of the arteries sets in, it's irreversible," he said.

The study "really sort of confirms prior information that we've had about the adverse effects of secondhand smoke," Faxon said.

Stanton Glantz, a professor of medicine at the University of California at San Francisco, said the findings add fuel to the debate over secondhand smoke.

"The findings of the study…add to the evidence suggesting that everyone should be protected from even short-term exposure to the toxins in secondhand smoke," wrote Glantz and colleague William Parmley.

"Communities should continue to require that workplaces, including restaurants and bars, be smoke-free and should mount public education campaigns to encourage smoke-free homes. Not only will everyone breathe better, but they will also have healthier hearts," they said. *AP and Reuters*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, July 26, 2001
Joachim and Anne

1st Reading: **Ex 19:1-2, 9-11, 16-20**
Gospel: **Mt 13:16-17**

Jesus said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

For I tell you that many prophets and upright people would have longed to see the things you see, but they did not, and to hear the things you hear, but they did not hear it."

Commentary

Early Christianity presented itself as a school of wisdom and a new philosophy. In all the gospels Jesus is the master who introduces his disciples into a higher wisdom and who reveals to them the secrets of the kingdom. This special gift brings with it a very high responsibility. For their turn they have to make disciples of all the nations and teach them to obey everything that Jesus commanded them. They have to function as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They have to guide humankind to a new knowledge of God, a wisdom that has the power to bring about a new relation with God and a new world.

Father in heaven, you have chosen us to share in the wisdom of Jesus your Son. Grant us faith, that we may follow Him in all the circumstances of life.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE/CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)—Unexplained flight as evidence of guilt of accused—The act, declaration or omission of a party as to a relevant fact may be given in evidence against him. One type of act that can be given in evidence against the accused is flight. In criminal law, flight means an act of evading the course of justice by voluntarily withdrawing oneself to avoid arrest or detention or the institution or continuance of criminal proceedings. The unexplained flight of the accused person may, as a general rule, be taken as evidence having tendency to establish his guilt. In fact, we have held that once an accused escapes from prison or confinement or jumps bail or flees to a foreign country, he loses his standing in court, and unless he surrenders or submits himself to its jurisdiction, he is deemed to have waived any right to seek relief from the court. [Citations omitted.] [Justice De Leon, Jr., Second Division, People v. Cirilo, G.R. No. 134245, December 1, 2000]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

SPORTS ON TV COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

GOLF: PGA B.C. Open, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Highlights at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports
Senior PGA Bellsouth Senior Classic at 3:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports
BILLIARDS: 2001 BCA Open 9-Ball Championship, Women's Semifinals at 5 p.m. (r), Finals at 9 p.m. on ESPN
VOLLEYBALL: FIVB Beach Volleyball - Spain and Italy Open, Men's and Women's Highlights at 4:30 p.m. on Star Sports

SPORTS
AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▨ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Armstrong keeps Tour lead

LAVAUR, France— Lance Armstrong's convincing lead in the Tour de France was untouched here Tuesday after a long but easy 15th stage eventually won by Belgian sprint ace Rik Verbrugghe. The 29-year-old US Postal team leader maintains his 5min 05sec advantage over his main rival Jan Ullrich of the Telekom team as the race begins to make its way back up towards Paris after a week of hard climbing. Armstrong, Germany's Ullrich and Andrei Kivilev of Kazakhstan–in third overall–were in the main peloton that came in 15:07 adrift of Verbrugghe and a group of 25 riders, signaling the lack of urgency after Monday's rest day. *AP*

Seigle stars as SMB ousts Mobiline

GAMES TOMORROW: (Philsports)
5:15 p.m.—Tanduay vs Purefoods
7:30 p.m.—Ginebra vs Red Bull

By JUNE NAVARRO

DANNY Seigle's scoring splurge in the final half powered San Miguel Beer to an 81-71 victory over Mobiline last night as the Beermen earned a semifinals stint in the PBA Commissioners Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Steady from the field, the 6-foot-7 Seigle fired 18 of his game-high 24 points in the homestretch and had seven rebounds and three assists.

Alaska arranged a best-of-five semifinals showdown with San Miguel Beer after scoring a 78-68 win over Sta. Lucia Realty in the second game.

The Beermen are the favorites in the next round, judging from the way reinforcement Nate Johnson made his teammates play.

Johnson finished with 23 points and set up shooters Seigle, Olsen Racela and Dwight Lago for the more important baskets.

SEIGLE

Lago and Racela contributed a triple each late in the fourth, while Seigle had two of his own that doused the Phone Pals' several tries at coming back in the payoff period.

The Phone Pals threatened, 61-68, on Todd Bernard's triple but Seigle, off a nifty pass from Racela, retaliated with a trey that signalled the end of the one-sided encounter.

Scores:

SAN MIGUEL 81—Seigle 24, Johnson 23, Racela 14, Ildefonso 8, Lago 6, Pena 4, Abuda 2.

MOBILINE 71—Taulava 20, Bernard 13, Gonzales 10, Pablo 9, Fran 7, Ejercito 5, Camaso 4, Ravena 3.

Quarters: 31-19, 43-31, 65-56, 81-71

IOC joins Fiba in BAP row

THE INTERNATIONAL Olympic Committee has now joined the search for a lasting solution to the long-running Basketball Association of the Philippines imbroglio.

This surfaced as the IOC and the International Basketball Federation agreed to closely monitor the conciliatory efforts of feuding parties Gonzalo Puyat II and Quinteliano Literal.

In a letter sent to the Philippine Olympic Committee dated July 24, Fiba secretary general Borislav Stankovic has ordered Puyat and Literal to amicably settle the rift until Aug. 31 in order to lift the suspension.

Otherwise, Stankovic said the IOC and the Fiba will send emissaries to the country on Sept. 1 to sit down with both groups and decide whom to recognize.

Stankovic said IOC officials met and discussed the situation with his group at the recent IOC session in Moscow where Belgian surgeon Jacques Rogge was elected IOC president.

Also, Stankovic gave Puyat and Literal seven days to sign an agreement for the Fiba to allow the POC to submit a provisional lineup and beat the SEA Games Aug. 10 deadline.

POC president Celso Dayrit said once both parties fail to come to terms within that period, "we are staring at the non-inclusion of a basketball team in the SEA Games."

LBC Batangas routs Socsargen

GAMES TOMORROW
3 p.m.—Cebu-Lhuillier vs Nueva Ecija
(Araullo, Cabanatuan)
5:30 p.m.—FedEx Laguna vs Davao
(RMC, Davao City)

CABANATUAN CITY—LBC Batangas solidified its hold of the lead after scoring an easy 103-86 win over Socsargen Wednesday in the Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase at the Araullo Centrum here.

Romel Adducul provided the muscle underneath while Ralph Rivera drained in the bombs from long range as the former national team stalwarts led the Blades to their sixth straight win and a league-best 9-2 overall.

Adducul, who shared Hardcourt Hero honors with teammate Jeffrey Sanders in the week just past, sizzled for 20 points. For his part, Rivera, who connected on all but one of his six attempts from beyond the arc, added 17 for the Batangas cause.

The scores:

LBC 103—Adducul 20, Rivera 17, Sanders 16, Compton 14, Serrano 12, Laure 9, Martin 7, Antonio 2, Corbin 2, Cuevas 2, Mapalad 2.

Socsargen 86—Santos 22, Bade 17, Salvador 10, Co 9, Teng 8, de Jesus 5, Reyes 5, Manalac 4, Natividad 4, Echavez 2, Alvarez 0.

Quarterscores: 37-19, 54-41, 84-65, 103-86.

La Salle battles UST; UE vs Adamson

STANDINGS	W	L
NU	2	1
Ateneo	2	1
FEU	2	1
La Salle	1	1
UE	1	1
UST	1	1
UP	1	2
Adamson	0	2

GAMES TODAY
(Philsports Arena)
10:30 a.m.—UE vs Adamson (Jrs)
12:30 p.m.—La Salle vs UST (Jrs)
2:30 p.m.—UE vs Adamson (Srs)
5:00 p.m.—La Salle vs UST (Srs)

AFTER getting axed by the University of the East, "four-ward" seeking La Salle hopes to regain the winning feeling as it tackles dangerous University of Sto. Tomas today in the resumption of the UAAP Men's basketball championship at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

"We got whacked and it was a very humbling experience for us," said team manager Terry Capistrano. "The next few games will test our character."

Hardly playing with their usual intensity, the Green Archers took a 79-58 thrashing from the Red Warriors to absorb their worst beating in recent memory, which became talk of the town.

The La Salle-UST tussle is set at 5 p.m., after the 2:30 p.m. clash between UE and Adamson. Adamson compiled a woeful 0-14 win-loss record last year and has lost its first two games of the season.

SPORTSWATCH

Perpetual stops St. Benilde, 75-71

GAMES SATURDAY *(Rizal Memorial Coliseum)*
12nn—SSC vs San Beda (jrs/srs)
3 p.m.—JRU vs PCU (jrs/srs)

CHESTER Tolomia doused College of St. Benilde's final minute surge to carry University of Perpetual Help-Rizal to a pulsating 75-71 victory yesterday in the NCAA varsity cage wars at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. Bringing his PBL MVP act over to the collegiate ranks, Tolomia canned two pressure-packed free throws with 9.1 ticks left to ensure Perpetual's second victory after five starts. Mapua rallied from 20 points down to beat Letran College, 76-71, in the other varsity encounter. The Cardinals tied their victims at 3-2.

Cebu to host Shell chessfest

CHESS-LOVING Cebu City hosts the Eastern Visayas leg of the 2001 Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships July 28-29 at the Sacred Heart School. Medals and cash prizes are at stake in the seven-round Swiss format tournament for bona fide students in the under-20 and below-14 age brackets. PLDT, Negros Navigation Corp., Solid Shipping Corp., Holiday Plaza hotel of Cebu and the Shell-Citibank Mastercard co-sponsor the tournament. "Chess still enjoys a tremendous following in Cebu since the days of chess player and ex-President Carlos P. Garcia. In subsequent decades, Cebu turned up both boxing champions and chess masters. Since 1992, the Shell chess competition has endeavored to discover chess champions and potential masters," said Shell special events manager Bobby Villarosa.

Spring Oil whips MMC-Rexona

GAMES TODAY
1:00 p.m.—Spring vs Army
2:30 p.m.—Konica (Nueva) vs Mighty Tobacco
4:00 p.m.—PMI vs MMC-Rexona

SPRING Cooking Oil banked on its deep bench to whip MMC-Rexona, 78-68, Tuesday to post its fourth straight victory in the Spiceland-NBC Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament at the Makati Coliseum. National shooter Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla's Spring cagers took the turn, 38-30, after a 13-13 first-quarter tie and never looked back. Spring kept the solo lead in the tourney sponsored by Pisong Asin, Spring Margarine, Tanduay Distillery, SMB, Ginebra San Miguel, Red Bull, Mobiline, Shell, Sta. Lucia Realty, Pop Cola, Alaska and Purefoods and supported by Milo.

More swim marks broken

THORPE

FUKUOKA, Japan—Ian Thorpe added another chapter to his burgeoning legend here Tuesday when he shattered his 800m freestyle world record, sharing the night with American Michael Phelps who smashed his 200m butterfly mark. The Australian's time to win the world championship title was all the more remarkable in that he did it just 30 minutes after swimming a competitive 200m freestyle semifinal. And it wasn't just shaving the record. He obliterated it, touching in 7:39.16 to beat the time he set earlier this year of 7:41.59. Grant Hackett led the race for 700 meters until Thorpe turned on his famous last lap sprint. The 1,500m specialist clocked 7:40.34, the second fastest time ever and under Thorpe's old world record time. Thorpe also broke the 200-meter freestyle world record later in the day with a time of 1 minute and 44.06 seconds. *AFP*

Xavier BEST winner

FORMER champion Xavier School rallied in the second half to turn back La Salle Greenhills, 48-44, Sunday in the Milo BEST Center's SBP/Passerelle basketball tournament at the Ateneo grade school covered courts. In other SBP games, Lourdes (QC) blasted Community, 71-46; Chiang Kai Shek whipped Northfield, 51-18; Notre Dame walked over La Salle Greenhills, 20-0; JASMS trimmed Lourdes (Mandaluyong), 63-58, after falling to St. Benedict, 80-36.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Air Love 2. Happy Return 3. Arabica 4. Jomangie

Race 2—1. Cue Artist 2. Daseldurf 3. Always 4. Native Talent 5. More Love

Race 3—1. Red Thunder 2. Pep Talk 3. High Pitch 4. Precious Janina

Race 4—1. I Dare You 2. Carlo's Charm 3. Osang 4. Pride of Dita 5. Witch Craft 6. Rain Check

Race 5—1. My Prayer 2. Passionately 3. Super Regent 4. Dona Evelyn 5. Johann Song

Race 6—1. Ilocandia Slew 2. Hazme Lady/Aim and Fire 3. The Magician 4. Top Quest

Race 7—1. Better Harry 2. Ocean Friend 3. May's Magic 4. Sir Olizon 5. Story Teller

Race 8—1. Agree to Agree 2. Oishi Oishi 3. Great Year 4. Victoria Scarlet 5. Silent Wind

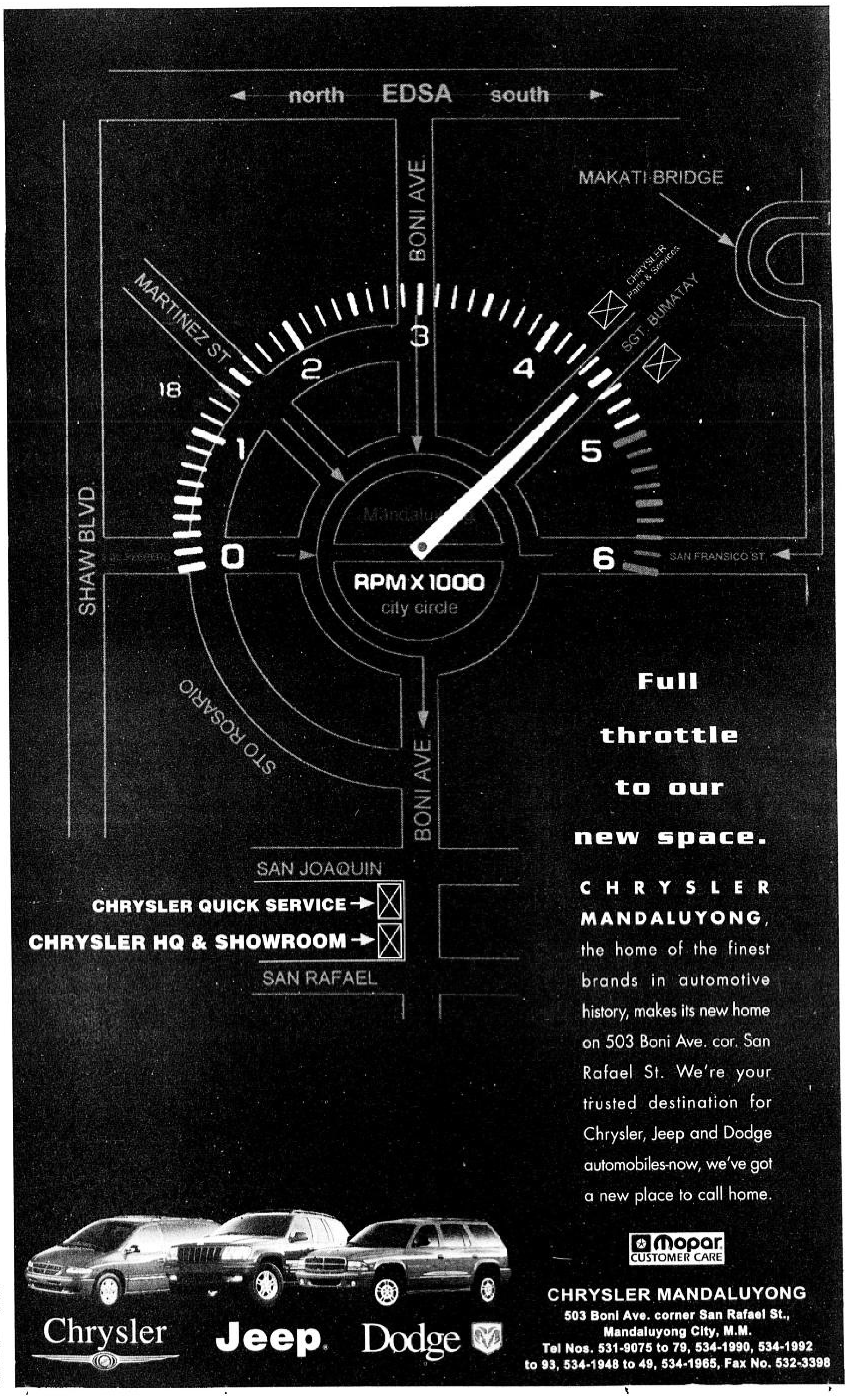
Race 9—1. I'll Be There 2. Suterian Era 3. Gallop for Gold 4. Be Ready 5. Boomerang

BASEBALL RESULTS

AMERICAN LEAGUE	W	L	Pct	GB
East				
New York	59	41	.590	–
Boston	57	42	.576	1 1/2
Toronto	47	54	.465	12 1/2
Baltimore	42	57	.424	16 1/2
Tampa Bay	32	68	.320	27
Central				
Cleveland	57	41	.582	–
Minnesota	58	42	.580	–
Chicago	49	49	.500	8
Detroit	43	54	.443	13 1/2
Kansas City	39	61	.390	19
West				
Seattle	72	28	.720	–
Oakland	54	46	.540	18
Anaheim	51	49	.510	21
Texas	41	57	.418	30
NATIONAL LEAGUE				
East				
Atlanta	56	44	.560	–
Philadelphia	55	45	.550	1
Florida	52	48	.520	4
New York	45	56	.445	11 1/2
Montreal	44	57	.436	12 1/2
Central				
Chicago	58	41	.586	–
Houston	55	44	.556	3
St. Louis	49	49	.500	8 1/2
Milwaukee	43	56	.434	15
Pittsburgh	38	60	.388	19 1/2
Cincinnati	38	62	.380	20 1/2
West				
Arizona	58	42	.580	–
Los Angeles	58	43	.574	1/2
San Francisco	52	49	.515	6 1/2
San Diego	49	52	.485	9 1/2
Colorado	43	57	.430	

AMERICAN LEAGUE
Boston 6, Toronto 4; Chicago White Sox 4, Cleveland 1; N.Y. Yankees 6, Detroit 5; Texas 8, Baltimore 7; Anaheim 9, Tampa Bay 6; Kansas City 6, Seattle 1; Oakland 7, Minnesota 6

NATIONAL LEAGUE
Florida 4, N.Y. Mets 3; Philadelphia 10, Montreal 2; Houston 2, St. Louis 1; Chicago Cubs 10, Pittsburgh 2; Cincinnati 11, Atlanta 3; Los Angeles 7, Milwaukee 2; Colorado 6, San Francisco 4; Arizona 11, San Diego 0. *AP*



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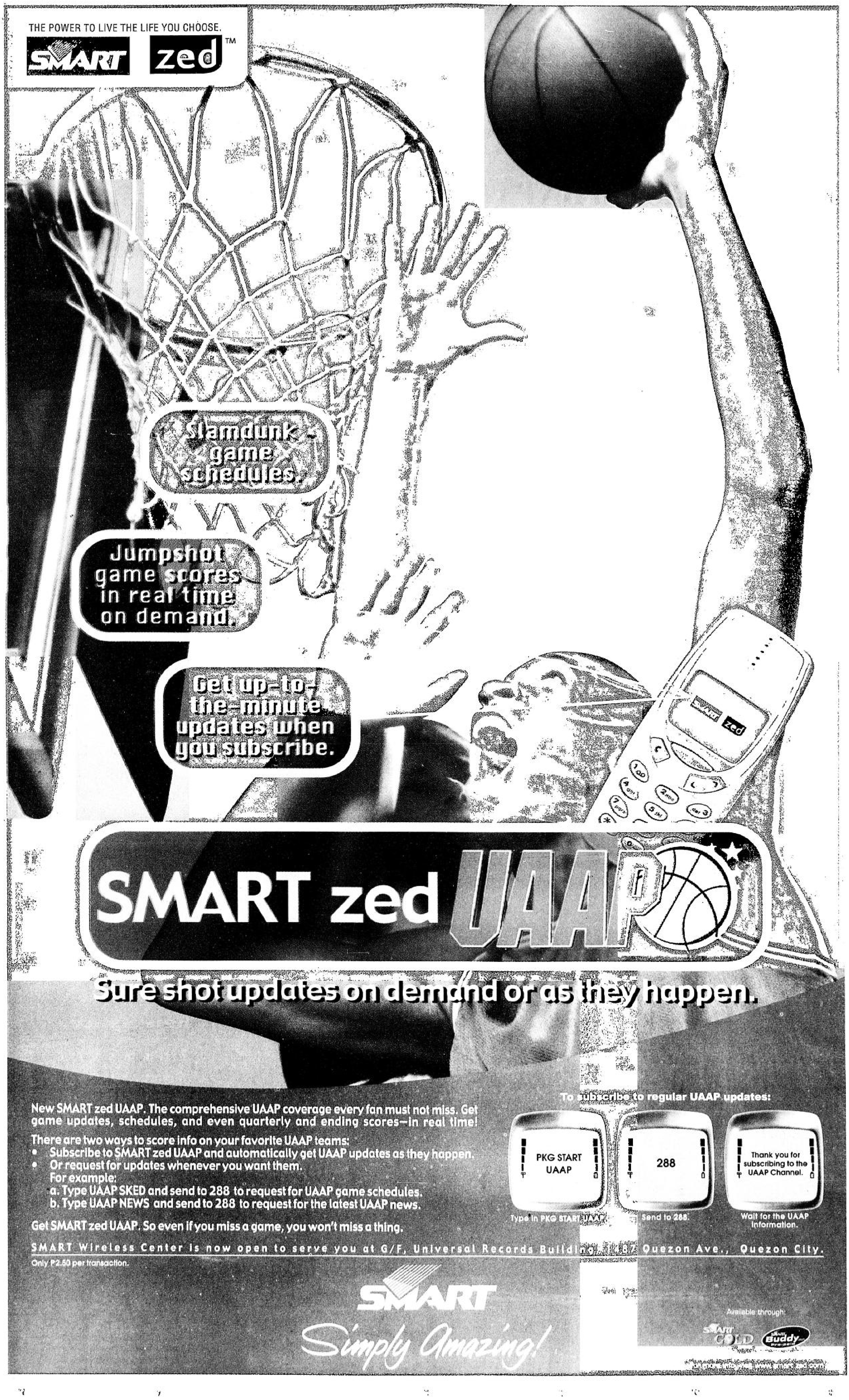

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Korean trader found dead

A SOUTH Korean businessman was found dead in the kitchen of his condominium unit in Pasig City on Tuesday. Supt. John Sosito, Pasig City police chief, however dismissed foul play in the death of Kim Young Yin, 55, director of Key Communication Philippines. Sosito reported there were no external injuries on Kim's body while his personal belongings were found intact. Insp. Antonio Paulite II, case investigator, also said there were no indications of struggle or forced entry into the victim's apartment.

METRO

Louie C. Camino, Editor

Lacson, chief of liars

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

SEN. Panfilo Lacson, breaking his long silence on my allegations about him, said in a letter to the Inquirer that he has "never stolen anything from anybody, living or dead."

Had Lacson made that in a face-to-face interview with a reporter, he would have said it with a straight face.

The guy can lie through his teeth and still keep a poker face.

***

When he was still with the dreaded Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG) in the 1970s, I once ribbed him about the stories he and his men would make up in order to show that captured crime suspects were killed in shootouts.

As a police reporter covering the MISG, I knew that the suspects were killed while their hands were tied or raised in surrender. Although I didn't see the actual execution, I was told by some of Lacson's subordinates who took part in the "salvaging" (summary executions) how the crime suspects met their end.

Lacson looked at me straight in the eye and without blinking said, *"Mon, hindi kami gumagawa niyan dito* (We don't do that here)." He meant that his men did not execute criminals.

***

In the aftermath of the Kuratong Baleleng rubout case, I saw Ping Lacson, who was then chief of Task Force Habagat of the defunct Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC), and exchanged a banter with him.

I told Lacson: "Ping, *hindi maganda ang pagkakasalvage n'yo sa mga* kidnapper at holdupper *na yun* (You botched the execution of those kidnappers and holdup men)."

My jest was not ignored. Lacson replied: "Mon, *hindi namin sinalvage ang mga yun. Napatay sila sa* shootout." Again, he said it without batting an eyelash.

***

In a three-page letter to the Inquirer—which, I understand, was written by former Inquirer reporter and People's Journal publisher Raymond Burgos—Lacson dismissed as "lies, falsehoods and inaccuracies" charges that:

O He ordered the killing of Reginald Hill, an MISG detainee, in the late 1970s. Hill's wife is now Mrs. Alice Lacson.

- He robbed a dead kidnapper of a very expensive watch.
- The kidnapper, a foreign Chinese, was executed by Lacson's men.

Magbago ka na, Ping, *dahil senador ka na. Huwag ka nang magsinungaling dahil baka ka tamaan ng kidlat!*

***

"I am not the demon that Mr. Tulfo and his financier/s want so much to maliciously and viciously portray," Lacson said.

What financier or financiers are you talking about, Honorable Senator? Nobody is paying me to expose you and your evil ways.

You are the demon personified, Mr. Senator, because only the demon could have committed the following:

- Order the killing of the boyfriend of a ramp model in 1975 because you wanted her for yourself.
- Order the killing of the boyfriend of a coed at Far Eastern University (FEU) to please the girl's parents. The girl's parents, who were your friends, didn't like their daughter's relationship to the boy.
- Order the killing of a 19-year-old girl and her sister, 7 years old, because they witnessed the execution of a crime suspect. The suspect happened to be the 19-year-old girl's boyfriend.
- Kick out of a helicopter flying over the Manila Bay two women whose only crime was that they were relatives of a notorious kidnapper.

Mr. Senator, you have remained silent on those charges which were based on the confession of former MISG civilian agent Francisco "Kit" Mateo, who carried out your orders. Mateo made the confession because he was dying of cancer.

***

You said that you met Alice, who was then Alice de Perio-Hill, on a blind date arranged by a friend.

But Mateo said you introduced yourself to Alice while she was visiting her husband at the MISG detention cell. You followed Alice when she got out of the MISG building. After that, you had an affair with her while her husband was in detention.

No, Mr. Lacson, Alice was not separated from her husband when you had an illicit relationship with her. You and Alice made a cuckold out of Reginald Hill.

A few months after Hill was released from detention, he was run over by a truck. I understand the truck even belonged to then Col. Rolando Abadilla, your boss at the MISG.

***

You said that I made the exposés in a two-part open letter to you in this space after you said I was in the payroll of then PNP chief Roberto Lastimoso.

You said that you scrapped my alleged P250,000 payola from Lastimoso when you became the PNP chief and that apparently I resented it.

When you were PNP chief I was praising you to high heavens because I thought you had integrity. So, if it were true that I resented your scrapping my supposed payola, how come I always praised you in this space while you were still PNP chief ?

The truth is I changed my attitude toward you when I learned that you masterminded the abduction and murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, and casino employee Edgar Bentain.

This was after you were already out of the Philippine National Police.

Only recently, I learned about the other atrocities you committed when you were still in the service.

'Callboy' singled out in Hayashi slay

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

A DASHING young man described as a "professional opportunist" killed renowned Japanese harpist Tadao Hayashi, police said yesterday.

Investigators are withholding the name of the suspect pending the arrest.

A man who identified himself as the one who had killed Hayashi, phoned police yesterday and said he would turn himself in.

He was supposed to surrender to Reynaldo Malonzo, Caloocan City officer in charge, but failed to show up at press time.

Chief Supt. Nestorio Gualberto, head of the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, said the suspect may be hiding in Mindoro.

Gualberto said he has already sent a CIDG team to the island province to flush out the suspect.

Short of calling the suspect a "callboy," Supt. Dionicio Borromeo, Caloocan Station Investigation and Intelligence Division chief, said the man makes a living by luring male homosexuals into living with him and giving him money.

Hayashi, 62, met the suspect through a mutual friend some time ago, Borromeo said.

Since then, the man, aged 21 to 23, regularly visited Hayashi at his two-bedroom bungalow in Caloocan, Borromeo said.

He said the suspect would usually come in the morning, leave after a few hours, and return at night to sleep with Hayashi.

A witness told police that the suspect dropped by the victim's house every day.

Borromeo said the suspect could have killed Hayashi over the weekend when the harpist failed to give in to his request.

"The suspect didn't mean to kill Hayashi," Borromeo told the Inquirer. "They had an argument and that triggered the brutal killing. The attack came unexpectedly."

He claimed the suspect has a tendency to get "violent" whenever his gay lovers failed to give in to his whims.

Investigators had dropped the possibility that Hayashi, a resident of Manila since 1985, was killed during a robbery.

Supt. Benjardi Mantele, Caloocan police chief, had said the Japanese even entertained the suspect, as shown by the two glasses found on a table in the victim's living room.

Mantele said Hayashi was killed between Sunday and Monday morning. Antonio Clet, Tadao's office assistant, found the body.

Police said the suspect was so strong he managed to grab Hayashi by the hair and slam his head and face on the floor, wall and cabinet.

METROBRIEFS

Death for rapist

A 45-YEAR-OLD man found guilty of repeatedly raping his 13-year-old daughter in Valenzuela City last year was yesterday sentenced to death and ordered to pay his daughter at least P200,000 in moral damages. Court records showed that the man who was jobless raped his daughter several times in their house in Malinta, Valenzuela. The last rape, the records showed, happened on Sept. 10 last year. *Christian V. Esguerra*

Robbers arrested

SUSPECTED Waray-Waray gang members Arnold Cajan, 22, and Dante Oresa, 22, both of Anak Pawis II in San Andres, Cainta, Rizal were yesterday arrested in Pasig City. Witnesses pointed to them as the ones who shot dead on May 1 Indian national Avtar Singh on Osmena Street, Lifehomes Subdivision in Barangay Rosario, after the foreigner refused to hand them his money and motorcycle, said Insp. Antonio Paulite, Pasig police criminal investigation chief. *Agnes Donato*

Jealous man kills wife

JEALOUS husband Joselito Caneja, 42, on Tuesday allegedly beat to death his wife, Florentina, 40, whom he suspected of having an affair with another man, police said yesterday. Caneja is now facing parricide charges before the city prosecutor's office. Police said that Caneja beat up his wife about 11 a.m. on Tuesday inside their house on Bezzote Street, Karuhatan in Valenzuela City. Florentina's brother, police said, rushed her to the Valenzuela General Hospital when she began to vomit blood. But Florentina died on her way there, police said. *Christian V. Esguerra*

2 killed in Pasay

JERRY Magote, 35, of F.B. Harrison Street, and Roderick Pelayo, 17, of 371 Bo. Bayanihan, Maricaban, Pasay City, suffered stab wounds in the body after a group of teenagers attacked them yesterday in Pasay City. Police said the suspects appeared to be high on drugs when they attacked Magote about 1 a.m. at the Pasay City rotunda on Edsa corner F.B. Harrison Street. Two hours later, an unidentified man stabbed Pelayo while he was waiting for a ride home on Malibay Street, police said. Senior Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District Office director, has ordered more police presence at the Pasay City rotunda. *Nelson Forte Flores*

JOJO FIGUEROA

MOST WANTED

Most wanted criminals Jojo Figueroa and Augusto Nonoso are presented to media after their arrest. Figueroa is wanted for rape, while Nonoso is wanted for four counts of murder. VAL HANDUMON

Big technology expo set

WHAT could go down as the biggest Information and Communication Technology exposition in the country will be held for 24 days at the Greenhills Shopping Center in Ortigas, San Juan to showcase the widest array of ICT products and services of about 500 IT companies and exhibitors. Dubbed the "ICT SHOW 2001," the event, slated Sept. 20 to Oct. 13, will serve as launching pad for a series of activities aimed at transforming the Philippines as the IT capital of Asia.

Expected to grace the occasion are high government officials and prominent businessmen who are all supportive of the efforts to promote the dissemination and importance of ICT in Filipino life. The exposition will feature daily informative and business seminars, company presentations, sale of products and services, the introduction of e-purchase and e-commerce as well as network gaming for all visitors.

For details e-mail: convex@mozcom.com.

Law student killed by guard for resting in front of Isetann

BY JEROME ANING

A LAW student who stood his ground in front of the Isetann Shopping in the Quiapo district was shot dead by a mall security guard Tuesday night.

Rolly Arias, a native of Malilipot, Albay and a resident of 758 M.V. delos Santos St., Sampaloc who was to take the bar examinations in September, died while being rushed to Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Police are hunting down suspect Francisco Sumbello, an employee of the LDT Security Services Inc. detailed at the Isetan Cinerama Complex on C.M. Recto Avenue.

Investigator SPO1 Benito Cabatbat of the city police's homicide said the suspect is between 24 and 26 years old, about 5-feet-6-inches tall, fair-complexioned, stocky and has short and curly hair.

Arias and his board mates, Anthony Adrao and Bryan Cac, had a late snack at a fast-food store along Recto Avenue and were heading home around 11 p.m. when they decided to rest for a while in front of the Isetan.

The three sat on the sidewalk along Evangelista Street, where they were spotted by Sumbello and another watchman, Amor Opeña, 24.

According to Adrao and Cac, the guards tried to drive them away from the sidewalk, saying that standing by and loitering in front of the mall is prohibited.

Police said the victim tried to explain that they could not just be shooed away because they were seated on the sidewalk, which technically is not a mall property. Arias added that they were only resting and would soon be on their way.

The watchmen, however, reportedly got irked. After Arias refused to budge, he approached the victim and fired his 12-gauge shotgun point-blank at the abdomen of the law student.

Cac and Adrao fled the scene and ran all the way to their boarding house on M.V. delos Santos where they narrated what happened to their landlady, Mildred Retella, who promptly alerted the police.

Operatives of the Plaza Miranda police community precinct headed by Chief. Insp. Ferdinand Quirante arrived at the scene and found Opeña and the head of the mall's night-shift security, Aniceto Fabia, near Arias' body.

Quirante said they caught Fabia placing a fan knife near the victim's hand, in an apparent attempt to plant evidence. Sumbello's shotgun was found in the possession of Opeña, but he said the suspect gave it to him before fleeing.

Fabia, 27, and Opeña were both detained and brought to the homicide section. Investigators were considering filing charges of obstruction of justice against them.

Teenager shot dead after winning basketball game; teammate critical

BY JEROME ANING

AFTER winning a basketball game, a teenager was killed while his teammate was seriously wounded after they were attacked and shot by the losing group in Quiapo before dawn yesterday.

The shooting took place while victims Ric Fuentes and Romeo dela Cruz, resident of 828 R. Hidalgo St., and two other friends were resting on the sidewalk at the corner of Hidalgo and Elizonde Street around 4:30 a.m.

Fuentes, who was shot in the head, died on the spot.

Dela Cruz, who also suffered a head wound, is in critical condition at the Philippine General Hospital.

The four had just finished playing a long basketball game, according to investigator PO3 Rodelio Lingcong of the city police's homicide section. The victims' team emerged victorious but the other group was left grumbling in defeat.

While the four were resting, four young men, one of them armed with a handgun, sneaked behind the winners.

.The gunman fired several shots, hitting Fuentes and Dela Cruz. He then fled the scene with his companions.

Investigators retrieved from the scene a .9mm-caliber spent shell and a live .9mm-caliber bullet. The suspects, whose descriptions were given to the police by the surviving players, are now being sought by the police.

Mangaldan meet

THERE will be a general meeting and reunion of Mangaldan residents in Metro Manila at the Max Restaurant on Quezon Avenue starting at 6 30 p.m. today. For details, call up Mike Evangelista, 364-9145 and Julie Abalos, 931-6363.

Nun accused of injustice refuses to talk to media

BY PHILIP C. TUBEZA

A NUN belonging to a progressive Catholic religious order known for espousing social justice causes was accused of illegally dismissing two faculty members of St. Bridget School in Quezon City.

Educators Rolly Casuga and Jean Chavez said Sr. Mary Tarcila Abano, of the Religious for the Good Shepherd (RGS), fired them from the school faculty "without solid basis and without respect for due process."

The two were fired for allegedly not submitting Professional Regulatory Commission documents showing they had taken concrete steps to secure their licenses as professional teachers.

Abano gave them up to July 15 to submit the documents. But two days before the deadline, the nun signed their walking papers.

"We submitted our PRC documents on July 14, exactly the day before the deadline," Casuga said. "It was our principal who violated her own self-imposed deadline because she issued the termination orders before the prescribed deadline had even elapsed."

"On procedural due process alone, this is already one blatant violation," he added.

Chavez worked at St. Bridget for 13 years while Casuga stayed there for eight years. They said they are permanent employees and, under the Labor Code, can only be dismissed if there is just cause.

While the complainants admitted they did not immediately follow up their PRC papers, the two stressed that they were able to follow Abano's order.

"We admit we procrastinated a bit as we are victims of our 'Pilipino time' culture," Chavez said. "But why penalize and prejudge us beforehand, that we will not work for our license when we still have time."

"Sister Tarcila herself acknowledged the fact that the exams necessary to secure the license are scheduled in August," she added.

The two said they are disappointed at the treatment they got from Abano, noting that her religious order is a known "advocate of social justice."

Sr. Christine Tan, who blew the whistle on the Estrada family for cornering the charity fund of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, and Sr. Sol Perpiñan, founder of the Ibon Facts and Figures and the Third World Movement Against the Exploitation of Women, both belong to the RGS.

The Inquirer went to St. Bridget last week and tried to get Abano's side, but she was said to be attending a meeting at another school.

On Tuesday, the Inquirer again went to the school but was barred from entering the gate.

When this reporter tried to explain that the Inquirer needed to get Abano's side, the guard apologized and explained that he was under strict orders not to let the press in.

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BUMA 9595 KAMAGONG ST. MAKATI — CHANNELS FUSION 896.2116/896.1939
Cowboy — J BROTHERS KNIGHTS NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 801.7644
Cowboy — STREETLIFE MIX-UP/HOT STUFF NO ENTRANCE FEE 525.1474/525.4269
Cowboy — KOOL JACKS FAT 16 NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 521.8143
Cowboy NOVALICHES Q.C. — FEEDBACK CITYBORN NO ENTRANCE FEE ☎ 936.9757
LOWTOWN Music Bar & Restaurant — LAFFATTAK (MUSIC & COMEDY) P 250 CONSUMABLE ☎ 373.3333
KAMPO 2086 — AEGIS FIGURE 8/NXT PAGE P 250 CONSUMABLE 373.7181/373.5110
LITE n' LIVE — BLAKDYAK ANNA & JOJO/ENTITY P 150 CONSUMABLE 373.7183/373.2221
ACROSS CENTRAL MARKET — JEREMIAH w/ SPECIAL GUESTS SIDE A JULY 28 P300/735.1280
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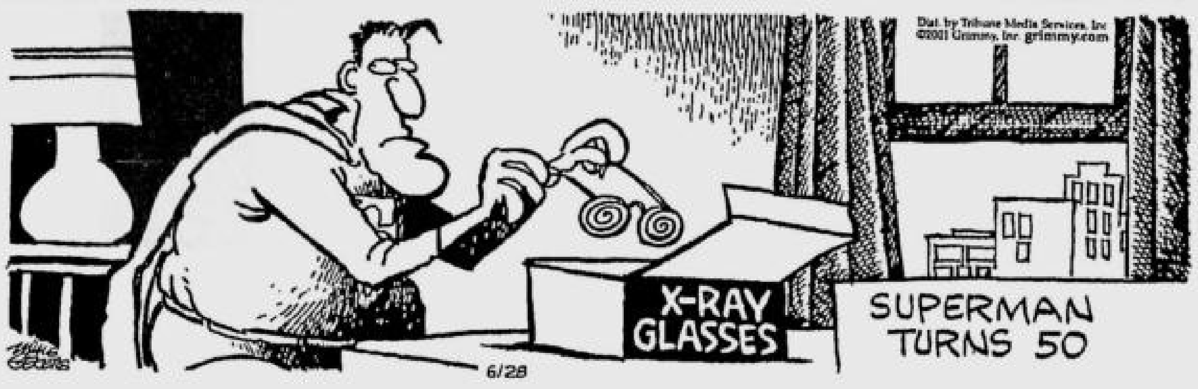
COMIC Relief

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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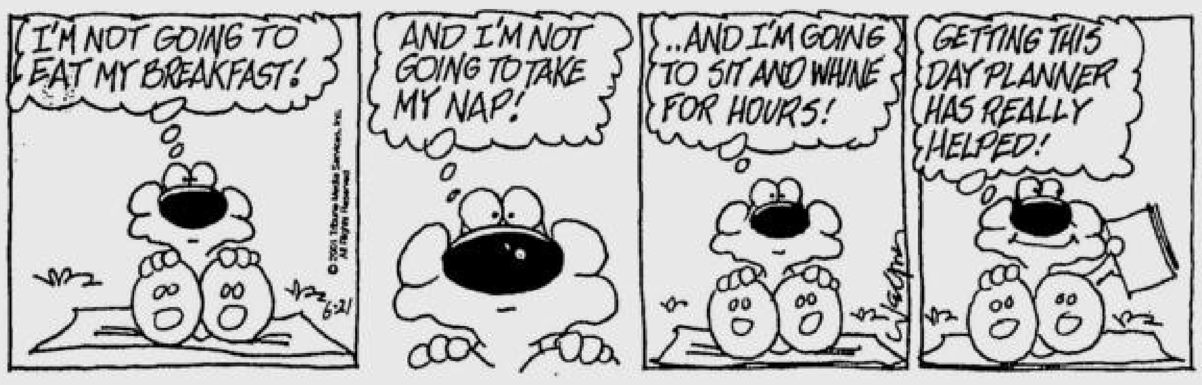
X-RAY GLASSES
SUPERMAN TURNS 50
6/28

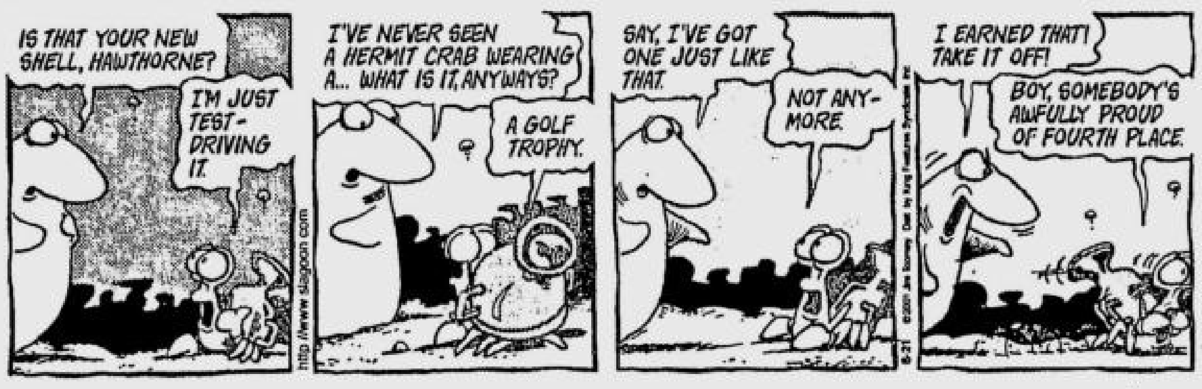
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


I'M NOT GOING TO EAT MY BREAKFAST!
AND I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE MY NAP!
..AND I'M GOING TO SIT AND WHINE FOR HOURS!
GETTING THIS DAY PLANNER HAS REALLY HELPED!
6-21

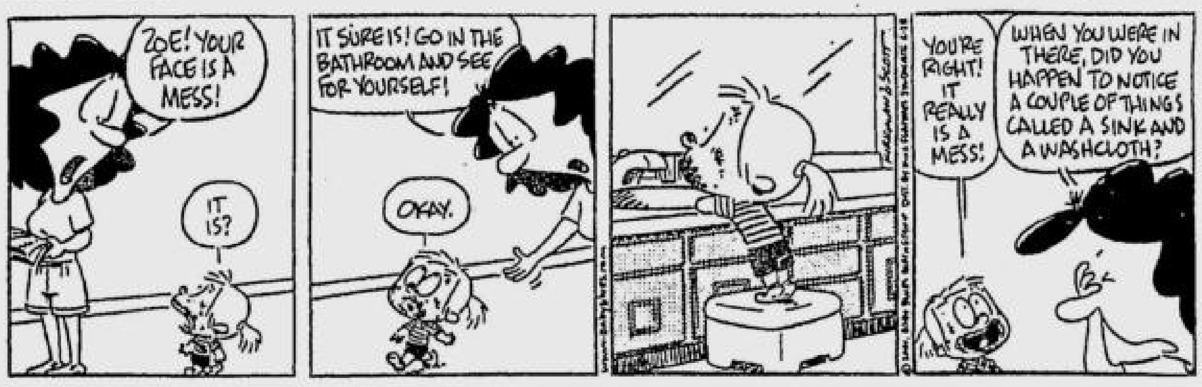
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


IS THAT YOUR NEW SHELL, HAWTHORNE?
I'M JUST TEST-DRIVING IT.
http://www.slagoon.com
I'VE NEVER SEEN A HERMIT CRAB WEARING A... WHAT IS IT, ANYWAYS?
A GOLF TROPHY.
SAY, I'VE GOT ONE JUST LIKE THAT.
NOT ANY-MORE.
I EARNED THAT! TAKE IT OFF!
BOY, SOMEBODY'S AWFULLY PROUD OF FOURTH PLACE.
6-21

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ZOE! YOUR FACE IS A MESS!
IT IS?
IT SURE IS! GO IN THE BATHROOM AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!
OKAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT! IT REALLY IS A MESS!
WHEN YOU WERE IN THERE, DID YOU HAPPEN TO NOTICE A COUPLE OF THINGS CALLED A SINK AND A WASHCLOTH?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Stanley Kubrick, Mick Jagger, Blake Edwards, Helen Mirren, Sandra Bullock, Kevin Spacey, Dorothy Hamill

Happy Birthday: Settle down and concentrate on the basics. If you really want to get ahead, do the work yourself during the initial stages. Once you have the necessary backing, the minor details can be delegated to those who believe in your abilities. Your numbers: 3, 6, 14, 21, 28, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Social activity should include physical exertion. Go to a fitness club or participate in sports organizations. Travel will promote romantic interludes.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Professional matters will turn in your favor. You can accomplish a great deal by taking extra work home. Employers will be impressed.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You'll be ready to conquer the world. Become involved in competitive games. Your drive and inability to admit defeat will lead to the winners' circle.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Deception may be the root of the problem with emotional partners or with children. Don't overreact to situations involving loved ones. Get all the facts first.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Get together with friends. Romantic opportunities are likely to develop. Communication will bring interesting information about others. Your innovative ideas will attract attention.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll be talked out of your hard-earned cash if you trust some new acquaintances. Try not to give in to people who have sob stories or a sure-fire way to make fast cash. You need to learn to say no to those looking for handouts.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll be too hot to handle if someone triggers your temper. Make sure to plan your day carefully and stay too busy to let things get to you. Try to look at situations with humor.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Arguments will erupt. Be cautious while traveling. You'll have problems with authority figures. Your lover will be expecting more than you're willing to give.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Social events involving colleagues may be to your disadvantage. Don't cause friction or voice your opinions at work. Look at your bank balance before opening your wallet.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Concentrate on professional advancement. Problems with loved ones may be upsetting. Try not to let your personal life interfere with your career.

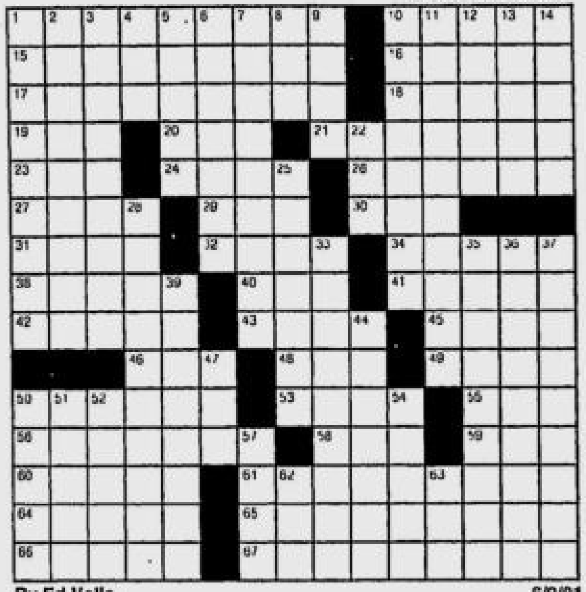
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't hang out with co-workers if you want to avoid problems. You should be considering pleasure trips or entertainment that will require physical exertion. You need to explore your own interests.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Romantic encounters will develop through work or individuals you meet while taking care of personal, financial or legal matters. Minor infections may cause you to take some time off.

Birthday Baby: You are energetic and bright. You crave variety in your life and will whet your appetite with as many different interests as possible. You are an adventurer as well as a humanitarian.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Ed Voile
Gillette, WY

6/9/01

ACROSS
1 Bug killer
10 Tiresome chaps
15 Invested with sovereign power
16 Bring to bear
17 Flowing freely
18 Brown tint
19 Understand
20 Youngster
21 Catching sight of
23 Wrath
24 Roberts or Stoltz
26 Itty-bitty
27 Catcher's glove
29 Bladed pole
30 Highland boy
31 Andes people
32 Station
34 Gold measure
38 Laurel and Mikita
40 Lendable organ?
41 Surrounding blockade
42 Pentateuch
43 Squeal to a halt
45 Front of a calf
46 Swig of moonshine
48 Actress Arden
49 Cravings
50 Leapt
53 Outer edges
55 Best pitcher
56 Riot queller
58 Order's partner?
59 Perlman or Silver
60 From now to then
61 Print too many
64 Artless
65 Summarizers
66 Blackthorn berries
67 Purple stones

DOWN
1 Prophet of doom
2 Become part of
3 Public conveyance
4 Word ignored by alphabetizers
5 Fuming
6 Island nation near Mozambique
7 Admits into membership
8 Cub quarters
9 Advantage
10 Indicates
11 White-and-yellow flower
12 Reattach a brooch
13 Gray and Moran
14 Too theatrical
22 Letters on McGwire's cap
25 Killer frog?
28 Old name of Madagascar's capital
33 Special right
35 Practices
36 Henry V's victory site
37 Nervous state
39 Roofing pieces
44 Three-time Masters winner Jimmy
47 Masters org.
50 Knocks for a loop
51 Pertaining to punishment
52 This compared to that
54 Rustle
57 Whiskey companion?
62 Ebullient energy
63 Porker's quarters

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

L	A	N	A	■	D	O	T	S	■	D	E	G	A	S
A	D	A	M	■	E	V	E	L	■	O	P	E	R	A
M	E	S	A	■	B	E	A	U	■	D	E	I	T	Y
P	L	A	T	F	O	R	M	S	H	O	E	S	■	■
S	A	L	O	O	N	■	S	H	E	■	■	H	A	M
■	■	■	■	Y	A	P	■	■	R	E	M	A	D	E
R	U	S	T	■	I	R	A	N	■	G	A	B	O	N
E	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	I	N	G	W	O	R	D
S	C	A	D	S	■	Y	A	L	E	■	R	Y	E	S
A	L	L	D	A	Y	■	■	E	U	R	■	■	■	■
W	E	E	■	■	E	S	P	■	T	O	S	S	E	S
■	■	B	O	O	S	T	E	R	R	O	C	K	E	T
O	K	A	P	I	■	A	R	E	A	■	A	I	R	Y
C	E	C	I	L	■	R	O	I	L	■	N	E	I	L
T	Y	K	E	S	■	E	N	D	S	■	T	R	E	E

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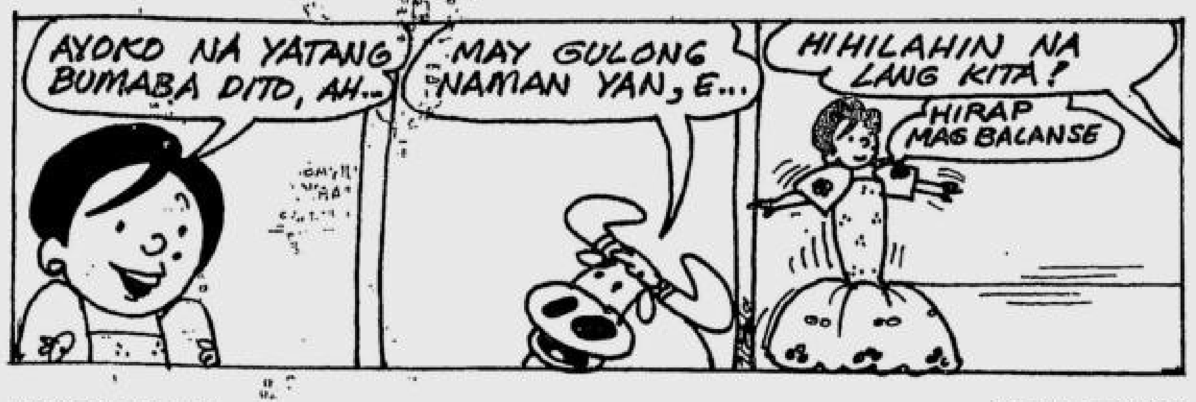
6/9/01

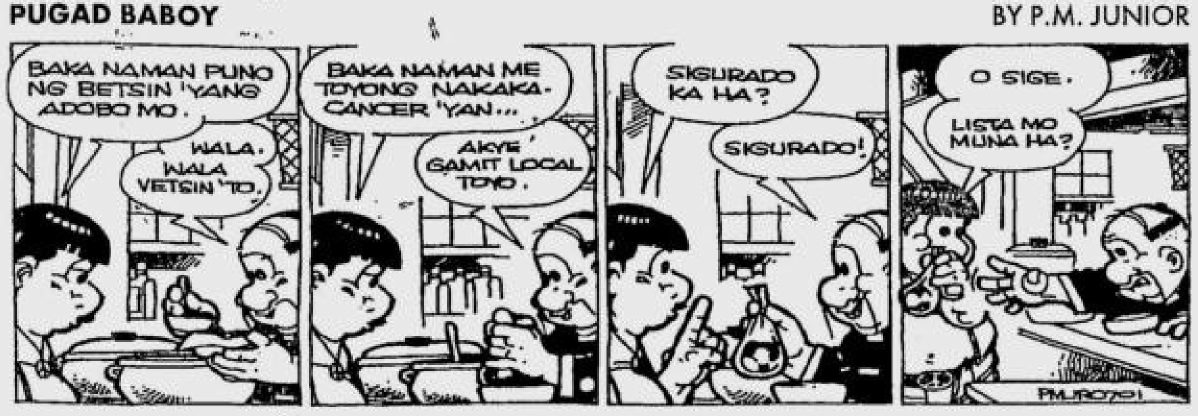
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AYOKO NA YATANG BUMABA DITO, AH...
MAY GULONG NAMAN YAN, E...
HIHILAHIN NA LANG KITA!
HIRAP MAG BALANSE

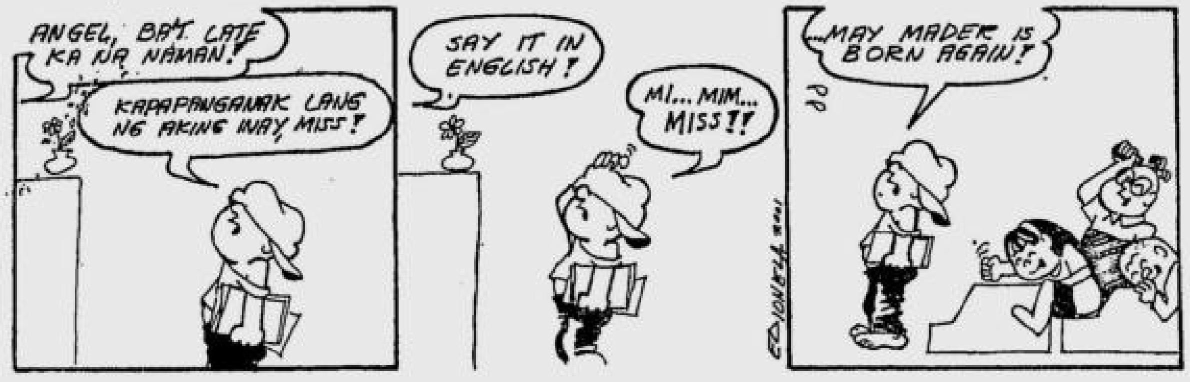
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


BAKA NAMAN PUNO NG BETSIN 'YANG ADOBO MO.
WALA. WALA VETSIN 'TO.
BAKA NAMAN ME TOYONG NAKAKA-CANCER 'YAN...
AKYE' GAMIT LOCAL TOYO.
SIGURADO KA HA?
SIGURADO!
O SIGE.
LISTA MO MUNA HA?
PMJR0701

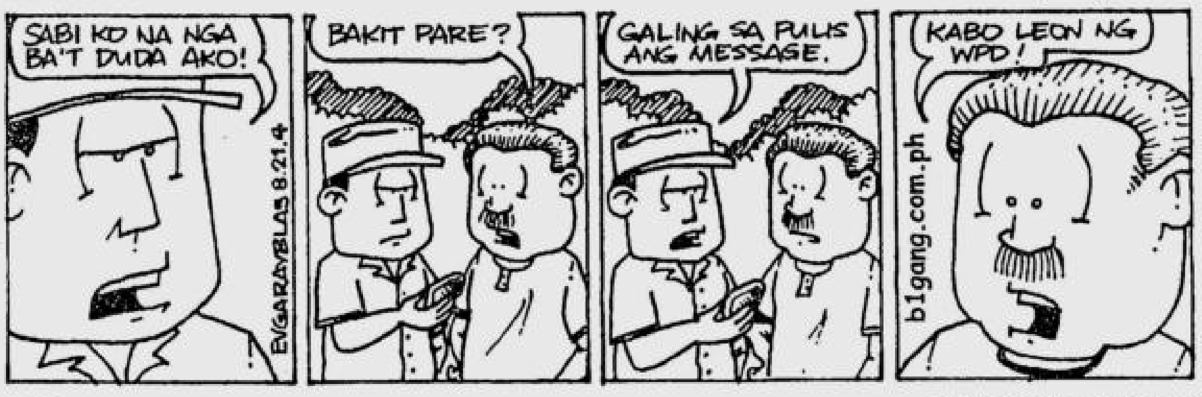
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


ANGEL, BA'T LATE KA NA NAMAN!
KAPAPANGANAK LANG NG AKING INAY, MISS!
SAY IT IN ENGLISH!
MI... MIM... MISS!!
...MAY MADER IS BORN AGAIN!
DIONELA

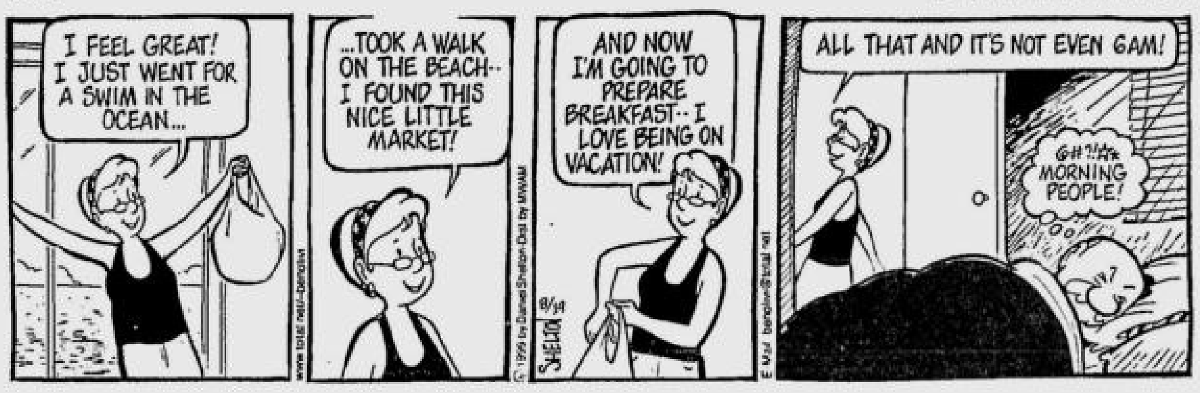
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


SABI KO NA NGA BA'T DUDA AKO!
EVGARAYBLAS 8.21.4
BAKIT PARE?
GALING SA PULIS ANG MESSAGE.
KABO LEON NG WPD!
b1gang.com.ph

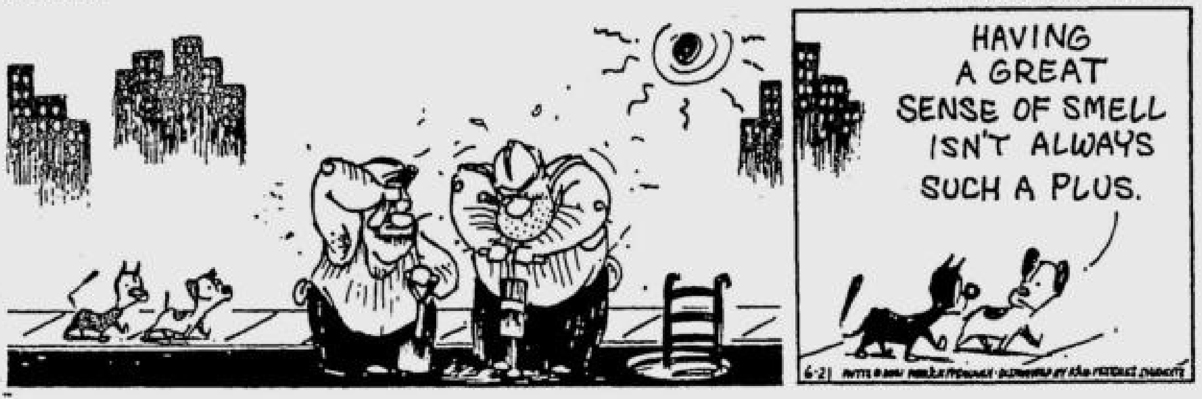
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I FEEL GREAT! I JUST WENT FOR A SWIM IN THE OCEAN...
...TOOK A WALK ON THE BEACH-- I FOUND THIS NICE LITTLE MARKET!
AND NOW I'M GOING TO PREPARE BREAKFAST-- I LOVE BEING ON VACATION!
ALL THAT AND IT'S NOT EVEN 6AM!
G#?!#% MORNING PEOPLE!
SHELTON

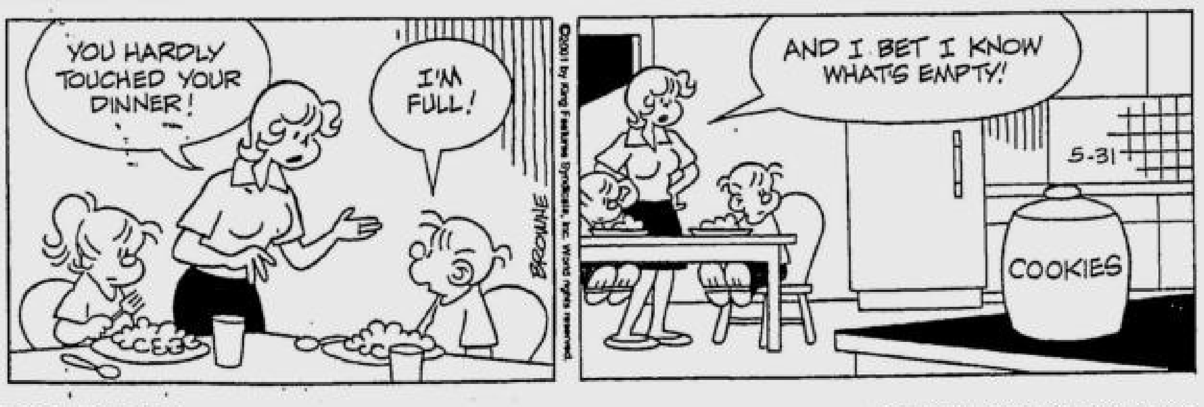
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HAVING A GREAT SENSE OF SMELL ISN'T ALWAYS SUCH A PLUS.
6-21

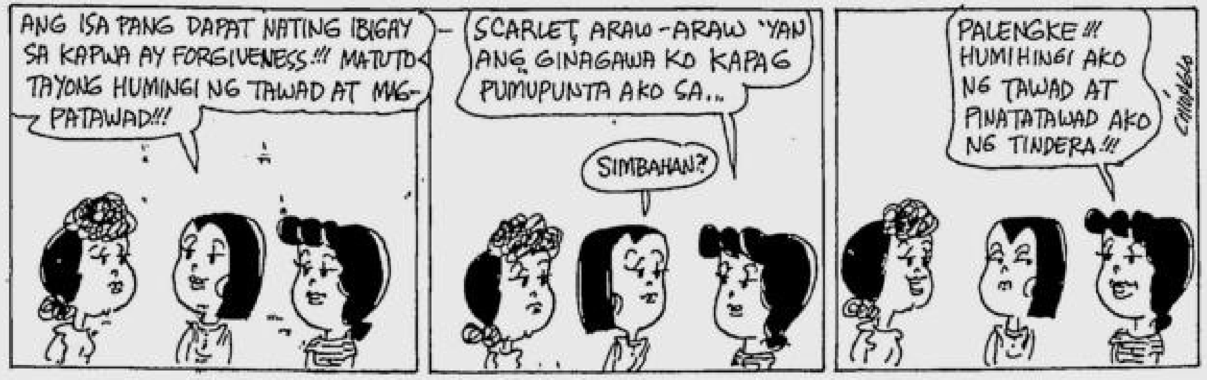
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


YOU HARDLY TOUCHED YOUR DINNER!
I'M FULL!
BROWNE
AND I BET I KNOW WHAT'S EMPTY!
5-31
COOKIES

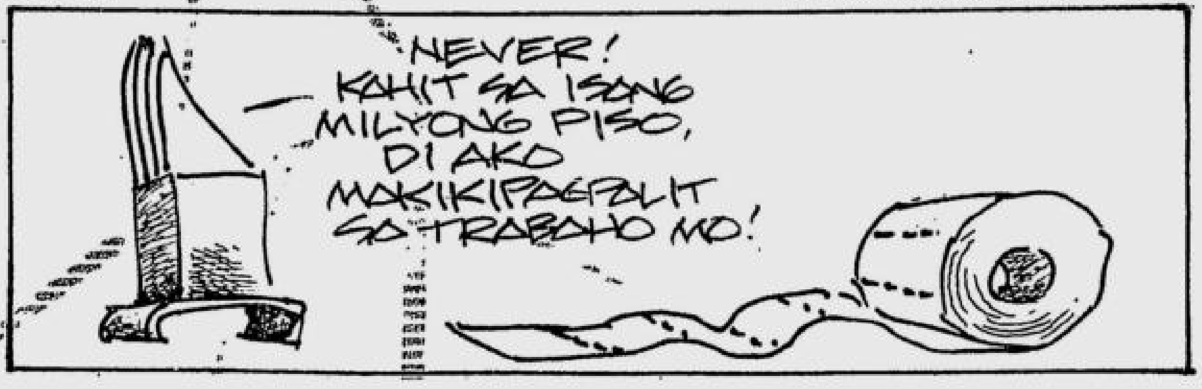
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG ISA PANG DAPAT NATING IBIGAY SA KAPWA AY FORGIVENESS!!! MATUTO TAYONG HUMINGI NG TAWAD AT MAG-PATAWAD!!!
SCARLET, ARAW-ARAW 'YAN ANG GINAGAWA KO KAPAG PUMUPUNTA AKO SA...
SIMBAHAN?
PALENGKE!!! HUMIHINGI AKO NG TAWAD AT PINATATAWAD AKO NG TINDERA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


NEVER! KAHIT SA ISANG MILYONG PISO, DI AKO MAKIKIPAGPALIT SA TRABAHO MO!

SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 633-9999

NOW SHOWING

CITY BACOOR 4173868

1	TOM CATS
2	DR. DOLITTLE 2
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	DRIVEN
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
7	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
8	FINAL FANTASY

CENTERPOINT 7149522-7161416

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	TOM CATS
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	DRIVEN
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	NAGAAPOY NA LANGIT
7	FINAL FANTASY
8	SWORDFISH
9	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
10	DR. DOLITTLE 2

CITY FAIRVIEW 9350740

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	BAGANSYA
3	SWORD FISH
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
6	DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS
7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	FINAL FANTASY
9	TOM CATS
10	DRIVEN
11	DR. DOLITTLE 2
12	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

CITY MANILA 5239240

1	TOMB RAIDER
2	TOMCATS
3	SWORDFISH
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	FINAL FANTASY
6	JURASSIC PARK 3
7	DRIVEN
8	ALONG CAME...
9	JURASSIC PARK 3
10	DR. DOLITTLE 2
11	PANGAKO IKAW..
12	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

MEGAMALL 6331901 • 6329401

1	JURASSIC PART 3
2	SWORDFISH
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	TOMCATS
5	FINA L FANTASY
6	TOM RAIDER
7	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
8	DRIVEN
9	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
10	JURASSIC PARK 3
11	DR. DOLITTLE 2
12	ALONG CAME A SPIDER

TUTUBAN 2564302

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	BAGANSYA
4	NAG-AAPOY...

DTS DIGITAL SOUND · DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	FINAL FANTASY
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
4	NAGAAPOY NA LANGIT
5	TOM CATS
6	SWORDFISH
7	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	JURASSIC PARK 3
9	DR. DOLITTLE 2
10	TOMB RAIDER
11	PARUPARONG LIGAW
12	ALONG CAME A SPIDER

SOUTHMALL 8066099 • 8066782

1	SWORDFISH
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
5	DR. DOLITTLE 2
6	SWORD FISH
7	FINA'L FANTASY
8	JURASSIC PARK 3
9	TOM CATS
10	BAGANSYA

GUADALUPE COMM'L 8820905

1	NAG-AAPOY
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	BAGANSYA

CEBU 2313876

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	PANINDA
3	FINAL FANTASY
4	DR. DO LITTLE 2
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
7	JURASSIC PARK 3

ILOILO 3208422

1	AMORSEKO
2	CLOSED
3	DR. DO LITTLE 2
4	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	CUTAWAY
6	JURASSIC PARK 3
7	CLOSED
8	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

PAMPANGA 7128015

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DUNGEONS AND...
3	TOM CATS
4	AMORSEKO
5	ONE NIGHT AT...
6	JURASSIC PARK 3

SUCAT 8294915

1	TOM CATS
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

DAVAO

1
2
3
4
5
6

SOON TO OPEN 6 STATE-OF-THE-ART MOVIE THEATERS

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1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DR. DO LITTLE 2
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	PANGAKO IKAW LANG

GLORIETTA 4

1	JURASSIC PARK 3 in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
2	SWORD FISH in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	JURASSIC PARK 3 THX in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	RIDE WITH THE DEVIL (Phil. Premiere) in DTS DIGITAL SOUND — Art Film
5	FINAL FANTASY in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6	JURASSIC PARK 3 in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7	TOMCATS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

GREENBELT

1	TOM CATS in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2	JURASSIC PARK 3 in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3	ALONG CAME A SPIDER in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4	MARTIN NIEVERA CONCERT JULY 27, & 28-9PM Onstage

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1	JURASSIC PARK 3 THX in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3	JURASSIC PARK 3 in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4	DR. DOLITTLE 2 in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5	TOM CATS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	FINAL FANTASY
2 (SDDS)	JURASSIC 3
3 (DTS)	SWORDFISH
4 GOLD (DTS)	DR. DOLITTLE 2
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	JURASSIC 3
6 GOLD (SDDS)	ALONG CAME..
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	JURASSIC 3
8	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
9	TOM CATS
10	DRIVEN

Pearl Plaza Cinemas (Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
3 (DTS)	
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	JURASSIC 3

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3 (Kalaw) tel 536.4315

1 (DOLBY)	
2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

Masagana CINEMA 2000 (Pasay) tel 831.6603

1	BAGANSYA.
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

starmall Movies (Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1	COMMAND & CONQUER
2	BAGANSYA
3	PANINDA
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	COMMAND & CONQUER
5	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

Metropolis (Alabang) tel 543.4001

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	MAHAL KITA...
4	NAG-AAPOY...
5	COMMAND & CONQUER
6	JURASSIC 3
7	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
8	BAGANSYA

LOUIE'S CINEMA THX (Makati City) tel 751.2010/892.3349

1	JURASSIC PARK 3

Center Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
2	DUNGEON & DRAGONS

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC. tel 930.9515

1	UNANG TIBOK
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	NAG-AAPOY...

Spring (Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1	NAG-AAPOY..
A	JURASSIC PARK 3

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	BAGANSYA
2	TEASER
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

City (Manila) tel 739.8588

1 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	BAGANSYA
5	NAG-AAPOY...
6	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
7 (DTS)	DR. DO LITTLE 2
8 (SDDS)	TOM CATS
9 (DOLBY)	FINAL FANTASY

Caloocan tel 362.3508

2	JURASSIC PARK 3

Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	PANGAKO, IKAW LANG
2	NAG-AAPOY...
3	BAGANSYA
4 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
5	MAHAL KITA...
6 (DOLBY)	FINAL FANTASY
7 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
8	PARU-PARO
9	AMORSEKO

Commonwealth tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	BAGANSYA
3	NAG-AAPOY...
4	PANGAKO..
5 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	MAHAL KITA...
7 (DOLBY)	FINAL FANTASY
8	PARUPARONG LIGAW

Ortigas tel 656.6795

1	BAGANSYA
2	NAG-AAPOY...
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
5 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470

1	JURASSIC PARK 3

Sampaguita (Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	JURASSIC PARK 3

Dilson (Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	NAG-AAPOY..
Lords	BAGANSYA
Jennet	NAG-AAPOY..

THE MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	NAG-AAPOY...
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	RESERVED
4	MAHAL KITA..

Prima (Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	MAHAL KITA...
3	TOM CATS
4	BAGANSYA
5	NAG-AAPOY...

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA tel 244.4619

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	BAGANSYA
3	NAG-AAPOY...
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	MAHAL KITA

Baclaran LRT LRT CINEMA tel 512.0115

1 (DOLBY)	BAGANSYA
2	NAG-AAPOY.
3	JURASSIC PARK 3

Berma tel 879-2029 or 30

1	JURASSIC PARK 3.
2	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT

CitiMall (Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	
2	
3	BAGANSYA
4	JURASSIC PARK 3

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall (Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	DRIVEN
2	DUNGEONS
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	SWORDFISH
2 (DTS)	DUNGEONS
3 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	DRIVEN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) Tel. (049) 411-1146

1	DRIVEN
2 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
3 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3.
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	PANGAKO
2	SWORD FISH
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	UNANG TIBOK
3	NAG-AAPOY..
4 (DTS)	BAGANSYA

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DRIVEN
3 (DTS)	SWORDFISH
4	COMMAND AND CONQUER
5	DUNGEONS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DUNGEONS
3	DRIVEN

Olivarez Los Baños tel (049) 536.5101

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DUNGEONS
3	DRIVEN

Olivarez Tagaytay tel (046) 413.0311

1	DR. DOLITTLE-2
2	PANGAKO...
3	AMORSEKO

Morales Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	DUNGEONS
3	DRIVEN

Cabuyao (Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	DUNGEONS
2 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3

Fourstep (Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	JURASSIC PARK 3

Emperor (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	PARU PARO
2	JURASSIC PARK 3.
3	ACCIDENTALSPY

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	MAHAL KITA
2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
3	FINAL FANTASY
4	DRIVEN

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	JURASSIC PARK 3
2	MAHAL KITA
3	ALONG CAME
4 (DTS EX)	JURASSIC PARK 3
	DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

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1	JURASSIC PARK-3
2	FINAL FANTASY
3	DR. DO LITTLE
4	SWORDFISH
5	JURASSIC PARK-3
6	JURASSIC PARK-3
7	TOMCATS
8	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
9	DRIVEN
10	ALONG CAME A SPIDER

ERMITA 536-7809 TO 12

1	JURASSIC PARK-3
2	FINAL FANTASY
3	DR. DO LITTLE
4	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
5	JURASSIC PARK-3
6	SWORDFISH
7	JURASSIC PARK-3

IMUS (046) 471-9188

1	JURASSIC PARK-3
2	DRIVEN
3	FINAL FANTASY
4	JURASSIC PARK-3
5	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
6	TOM CATS

NOVALICHES 938-2243

1	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
2	SOON TO OPEN
3	ROMEO MUST.../PROOF OF...
4	SWORD FISH
5	JURASSIC PARK-3
6	FINAL FANTASY
7	JURASSIC PARK-3
8	DR. DO LITTLE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453

1	JURASSIC PARK-3
2	JURASSIC PARK-3
3	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
4	SWORD FISH
5	ACCIDENTAL SPY
6	ATLANTA

SOON TO OPEN

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SAN FERNANDO PAMPANGA

THX · DOLBY · DOLBY STEREO · dts · SDDS

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BAGANSYA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	FINAL FANTASY
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	TOMB RAIDER
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	DR. DOLITTLE 2
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	JURASSIC PARK 3
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT/EYES WHITE SHOOT
ODEON	JURASSIC PARK 3
ODEON-2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
ROBEN	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-1	UNANG TIBOK
TANDEM-2	AMORSEKO
TIMES	EXIT WOUNDS/MEXICAN
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	MAHAL KITA...
QUEZON-1	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR	JURASSIC PARK-3
REMAR-2	PARUPARONG LIGAW
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-2	SWORDFISH
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MAHAL KITA KAHIT...
CINEMA-2	NAG-AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-3	BAGANSYA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	TOMB RAIDER
CINEMA-6	PARO PARONG LIGAW
CINEMA-7	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-8	DRIVEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	FINAL FANTASY
CINEMA-12	DR. DOLITTLE 2
CINEMA-14	TOM CATS
CINEMA-15	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	DR. DOLITTLE-2
CINEMA-2	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
CINEMA-3	JURASSIC PARK-3
CINEMA-4	SWORDFISH
CINEMA-5	JURASSIC PARK-3
CINEMA-6	JURASSIC PARK-3
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	TOROTOT
CINEMA-2	BATANG MAGDALENA
CINEMA-4	KAKAIBANG KARISMA
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	SPOT
CINEMA-2	MOLATA
CINEMA-4	COLLEGE GIRL

MUÑOZ

Annual search

PRIVATE Property shirts and accessories, with ATMACS present the second annual search for Private Eight.

Grand finals will be on July 28, 3:30 p.m. at the SM City North Edsa Entertainment Plaza.

Guests are Private Property image models Leandro Muñoz and Monina Bagatsing, with the Crossmovers and other surprise guest celebrities and models.

The show is hosted by comedians Bearwin Meily and Duday Galliguez, with last year's winners—Joel Jay Yap and Jennifer Rances. Del Pascual will direct.

Private Eight is also presented by 8 Waves Waterpark Resort, Southern Bulls Concert Bar, Greenwich SM North Edsa, Purificacion Flowers, Wendy's SM North Edsa, Lollipop Balloons Center, Salon de Orient Timog, Procter and Gamble Philippines, RC Creative Concepts and Pepz of Manila Salon.

Concert series

NATION Broadcasting Corporation's concert series in Cebu and Davao sizzle this month with back-to-back performances from Pido with Take One.

Tonight, Danny @ Rhythms 101.9 takes the acoustic, alternative music of Pido With Take One to the city's hippest concert place, The Venue, as the featured artist for "Danni's Concert Series."

Tomorrow, Pido With Take One flies to Cebu for "Charlie's Concert Series," the exciting musical presentation from Charlie @ Rhythms 101.9. It will take place at Home Club Restaurant.

Pido Esteves and his band members—Tonette Lipana, Mar-lowe Mata, Gino Cruz, Benjie Ijiran and Eva Marie Poon—will breathe life to music from James Taylor, Seal, England Dan and more.

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5:30 PM-JURASSIC PARK 3
8:00 PM- JURASSIC PARK 3
10:10 PM-JURASSIC PARK 3

ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Three generations

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

MARLON Brando has made himself scarce on the movie screen for some years now, so we're delighted to learn that he's finished shooting a new film, "The Score," directed by former Muppeteer **Frank Oz**.

To make the movie even more of an event, it also stars **Robert De Niro** and **Edward Norton**. This is great, because a case can be made for the view that Brando, De Niro and Norton are the best actors in their respective generations of screen thespians.

So, "The Score" is a must for movie buffs because it showcases the performances of the top exponents of three generations of the craft of film acting.

People who view the film will be given the rare opportunity of comparing the acting styles of the legendary Brando, the middleaged De Niro and the relatively young Norton.

Interestingly, all three actors had their start in very intense roles—Brando in "A Streetcar Named Desire," De Niro "Taxi Driver," and Norton in "Primal Fear."

In fact, it would be a fascinatingly instructive acting exercise to get De Niro and Norton to do their own takes on Brando's "signature" character in "Streetcar . . . ," **Stanley Kowalski**, to see how they would try to match Brando's "animalistic" portrayal.

But that's in the realm of fantasy. What's real is the three actors' first-ever thespic collaboration on "The Score," with Oz being given the enormously challenging honor of dealing with their volatile temperaments and creatively using them to come up with what will hopefully turn out to be an exceptional film.

"The Score" is a thriller about the theft of a priceless scepter by three competent but combative thieves. Brando plays it old-school and courtly, De Niro's character is cool and laid-back, while Norton is antsy and unpredictable. Needless to say, while they're all after the same prize, they don't exactly get along like three puppies in a basket.

Let's hope that Frank Oz is up to the task of reining in and orchestrating his three lead actors' legendary thespic energies.

Pop violinist—and vocalist

FROM the world of music comes news that pop violinist **Vanessa-Mae** has released her latest album, "subject to change." Co-written by Vanessa-Mae with record producer Youth, the pieces in the album present her for the first time as a full-fledged vocalist.

Vanessa-Mae started out as a typical classical violin prodigy. At only eight years of age, she was already wowing concert audiences. Between the ages of 11 and 13, she recorded three classical albums that were very well received.

But she wanted to reach out to mainstream music audiences, so in 1995 she released "Storm," her first pop album. Her new type of fusion music established her as an international star.

Her new album, "subject to change," consolidates Vanessa-Mae's gains. In addition, her collaboration with some hot dance producers, including JSIG and Airscape, aims to introduce her to an even younger audience.

'The Quest for Noah's Flood'

SEVERAL years ago, Dr. Robert Ballard used high-tech equipment to look for and find the wreck of the Titanic. This year, he has put his extraordinary ability to similarly eventful use, to search the Black Sea for the location of the flood in the Bible. The result of his efforts is the documentary special, "The Quest for Noah's Flood," to be screened on the National Geographic Channel at 9 p.m. this Sunday, July 29.

Why the Black Sea? A provocative book has proposed that the Black Sea was a fresh-water lake that was transformed to a brackish sea by a cataclysmic flood in 5,500 BCE, around the time that some biblical scholars have established Noah's Great Flood to have taken place.

Using state-of-the-art robotic submersible technology, Ballard and his team found some ancient shipwrecks, including a perfectly preserved vessel dated between 410 and 520 CE.

Verni Varga sings of the good news

BY LEAH SALTERIO

GENUINE happiness can be found. Ask singer Verni Varga.

Vernie says she was able to find true happiness with a lot of help from prayers. Today, she likes to tell her inspiring tale of how she settled down with the man God gave as the answer to her prayers.

Known as The Vamp and for being a big tease onstage when she's performing, Verni admits she used to be a woman of the world who enjoyed partying and going out with friends.

"It was never fulfilling," Verni allows. "That's why I looked for a deeper kind of satisfaction."

Even her relationships were temporary. When she was 23, she bore a kid out of wedlock, which, however, she doesn't regret.

"I asked God to give me the right man. My prayers were answered."

Verni recalls that they started on the right note on the day she went out on a date with businessman Ric Oledan, who would become her husband.

First date

"My prayer was that if I'd meet a guy, I wanted him and I to talk about God on our first date," she says. "You know, we really did."

Ric at that time was also looking for an ideal mate.

"We both played the field," Verni grants. "He was also looking for a wife and he also prayed for it."

After three years of constant dating, Verni and Ric were married in 1995, in a very private ceremony in Pampanga, home of the Oledans. Only family members and their closest friends were invited.

Today, Ric and Vernie have two kids—Gian Franco, 5, and Giana, 2.

"The most important thing is that I'm happy," says Verni. "I'm contented with my personal life and my career. My personal relationship with the Lord is also on a different level. I now have a full understanding of what life is all about. Whenever there's a problem, there's always an explanation."

Living testimony

Verni is convinced God has changed her, and she is now a living testimony of the way God works.

"I am not only singing now, I'm also sharing the good news," she says. "I'm not saying I'm holy, but I know God has really changed me.

"One time I saw the daughter of a family friend while I was at Vira Mall in Greenhills. When she looked at me, I knew right away she would share something with me. I had to enlighten her and we prayed together. By doing that, I was able to prevent her from doing something wrong."

Before her born-again faith, Verni wouldn't have given her spiritual life any serious thought. She was living life on the fast lane and she even once lost her voice.

God's gift

"I was smoking, drinking and partying a lot. Losing my voice became an eye-opener. I realized my voice was God's gift for me and I wasn't taking care of it."

Recently, Verni even tried her hand at songwriting and has come up with three inspirational songs.

In 1998, she wrote "You Are the One," which was arranged by Homer Flores.

When she was pregnant with Giana, she wrote a Tagalog piece called "Ikaw."

Ric, who plays the piano, helped create the minus-one for another composition, "I Will."

"I pray every morning and I write my thoughts," Verni says. "I read the Bible and I ask the Holy Spirit to help me write the lyrics and create the melody. It's really amazing because I don't even know how to play any musical instrument."

Although her family remains her top priority, she continues to be a sought-after live performer both here and abroad.

Last April, Verni was overwhelmed by the reception she received from the crowd at Bellagio, a luxury hotel in Las Vegas where she did an Easter show with singer-composer Jose Mari Chan.

"After the show, we saw a long line of people outside the venue and I asked someone, What are they waiting for? A little later, I was told they were waiting for Joe and me because they wanted to get our autographs and pose for souvenir photos. Most those who watched the show were Filipinos. I was very happy."

Solo concert

On July 30, Verni will perform at Hard Rock Café in Makati in a solo concert called "Jazz and Grooves" for City Lite 88.3-FM. Verni will sing hits by Janet Jackson and Lisa Stansfield, plus other songs in the jazz genre, from acid jazz to pop jazz to Latin jazz.

She will, as usual, do her famous take on Dave Brubeck's "Take Five."

"The audience is not satisfied when I don't sing it," Verni says.

Her repertoire also includes such pop hits as "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," "Follow Your Road" and "There You'll Be," the theme from "Pearl Harbor," recorded by Faith Hill.

As well, as she will do "Kahit Isang Saglit," which she recorded earlier than Martin Nievera's version.

"People might still see me as a tease, but on a different level," Verni says. "Apart from entertaining, I want to inspire my audience."

ANSWERED prayers. Verni Varga says she is a living example of how God works.

Why Princess is getting out of the show biz trap

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

I'M SURE most of you watched **Boy Abunda**'s one-on-one interview with **Princess Punzalan** on "The Buzz" a few weeks ago. For those who missed it: Cess cried as she explained why she decided to turn her back on show biz and to start a new life in New York before the year is over.

People who don't know Princess personally wonder why she sounded so unhappy about show biz and why she's sick of being stared at and being talked about. Cess is like a sister to me so I understand her. She's a simple person who got entangled in the complicated world of show biz. She's in show biz but she's not of show biz.

Pardon me for saying this but many stars have been eaten up by the system. In show biz parlance, such stars are "showbiz *na* showbiz." They are so wrapped up in the trappings of fame and fortune. They don't realize that trappings are a trap.

Show biz is not everything it's cracked up to be. There's a flip side to all the glitter and glamour. The sad part is, some stars get blinded by the flash.

As my mom always says, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

Here's Princess' final say about the issue.

"Boy asked me a question and I just answered it with all honesty. As long as the people close to me understand what I mean, okay *lang kung anong tingin sa akin ng ibang tao*."

To my dear Cess: A part of me will always be with you wherever you go. Thanks for not letting show biz change you a bit. The you I've come to love as a sister."

Personal

HAPPY happy Birthday to **Eric C.** I celebrate this day because it brought you into the world and made it more wonderful for me. *Je T'aime.*

Just asking

COULD it be true that **Ryan Cayabyab** is migrating to the United States with his family but he wants to keep it hush-hush? If this is so, Ryan will be a big loss to the music industry. He's irreplaceable. Hope he's not about to write his swan song.

Is it true that the father of the forthcoming baby of **Abby Viduya** (a.k.a **Priscilla Almeda**) is a handsome waiter in the United States? Wonder if marriage to Abby is on his menu.

For feedback, e-mail wateringhole2000@yahoo.com

One-night show

MILLADO

CALVIN Millado will headline a one-night show on July 31 at Bert Nievera's Duelling Pianos Music Lounge, 2nd floor of Country Waffles Restaurant in Annapolis st., Greenhills. Showtime is 9 p.m. Calvin is a sought-after fashion and commercial model, show host and theater and TV actor. He is now wrapping up his third album, this time for Viva Records. For more information, call 722-4411 or 722-4422.

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SWORDFISH - 18 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	JURASSIC PARK 3-P13 12:00, 2:10, 4:20, 6:30, 8:40	JURASSIC PARK 3-P13 11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

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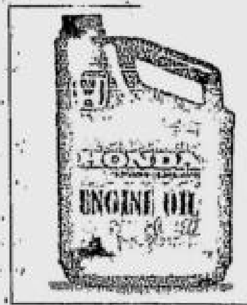

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BIR to look into books of forex traders, clients

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has directed the Bureau of Internal Revenue to investigate an initial 27 foreign exchange traders from banks and money-changing companies as well as 14 large clients to see if they had cheated the government of its much-needed revenue.

"I have instructed the BIR to examine the books of these foreign exchange traders just to make sure they are not making money (at the expense of) the government," Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has been coordinating with the DOF on the list of the banks, money-changing subsidiaries, their traders and their clients, according to Bangko Sentral Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes.

Reyes said the government wanted to find out whether the traders and their clients have been paying the right taxes for previous and current transactions.

"The government wants to know how these traders and clients were able to finance their forex transactions, what their source of funding was, and if their funding was justified by their income," the BSP official said.

Reyes declined to say if the DOF was using the central bank's list of the banks and their officers being suspected of "willfully and habitually" speculating against the peso.

The Bangko Sentral official admitted that the central bank continued "to see some evidence of speculation in the foreign exchange market."

From the central bank's end, Reyes said the Bangko Sentral has just received the letters from banks explaining their respective foreign exchange activities that were earlier questioned by regulators.

The Bangko Sentral has not meted out any penalty on any of the banks or money-changing companies suspected of speculating against the peso.

Meantime, Reyes said the plan to reduce by half the ceiling for "undocumented transactions" from $10,000 would be discussed by the policy-making Monetary Board in its regular meeting today.

The BSP earlier released a new set of stricter penalties for banks and their officers found speculating against the peso.

The new non-monetary penalties included the suspension and permanent disqualification of bank officers (including bank directors and country managers), suspension of activities like derivatives trading and foreign currency deposit unit authority.

The central bank also said it would impose a P30,000 fine for every violation.

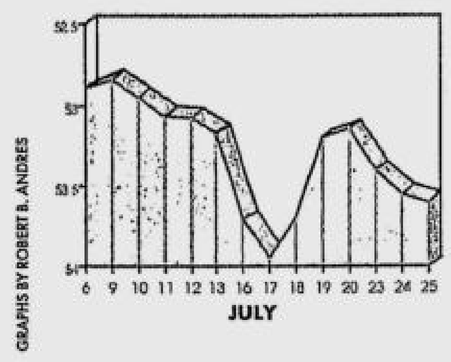
Last week, the Bangko Sentral expanded its foreign exchange hedging facility while the DOF vowed to speed up its foreign borrowings to provide the central bank with more ammunition to fight speculators.

The finance department is also planning to offer a new hedging facility for investors on top of the central bank's forward cover for big importers in need of dollars.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY ROBERT B. ANDRES

Peso-Dollar Rate

P53.60 = $1
As of 5 p.m.,
July 25, 2001

Y 124.30 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 124.30 as of 5 p.m., July 25, 2001

GOLD:$269/269.50
per ounce Hong Kong,
July 25, 2001

July 25, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.143641	1.000000	53.5520
Japan	Yen	0.009233	0.008073	0.4323
United Kingdom	Pound	1.627859	1.423400	76.2259
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146809	0.128370	6.8745
Switzerland	Franc	0.664135	0.580720	31.0987
Canada	Dollar	0.742817	0.649519	34.7830
Singapore	Dollar	0.629238	0.550206	29.4646
Australia	Dollar	0.581414	0.508388	27.2252
Bahrain	Dinar	3.033693	2.652661	142.0553
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.305787	0.267380	14.3187
Brunei	Dollar	0.624600	0.546150	29.2474
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000100	0.0054
Thailand	Baht	0.025019	0.021877	1.1716
UAE	Dirham	0.311449	0.272331	14.5839
Korea	Won	0.000876	0.000766	0.0410
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.874400	46.8259
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.447074	23.9417
France	Franc	0.152450	0.133301	7.1385
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.396785	21.2486
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.063545	3.4030
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021676	1.1608
Italy	Lire	0.000517	0.000452	0.0242
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.147064	7.8756
Portugal	Escudo	0.004987	0.004361	0.2335
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005255	0.2814
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021676	1.1608
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.110259	59.4566

STOCK MARKET

Stocks fall to new low

STOCKS ended at a fresh eight-month low yesterday on a bleak economic outlook, but soft drinks firm Cosmos Bottling Corp. surged on rumors that a takeover by beer giant San Miguel Corp. would be announced this week.

"The focus on the RFM-Cosmos-San Miguel deal is there. The speculation is it will be closed soon," said KGI Securities stock analyst Dara Calderon.

The Philippine main index closed 3.01 points or 0.22 percent lower at 1,366.01 points. It was the lowest since the index closed at 1,287.85 points on Oct. 31.

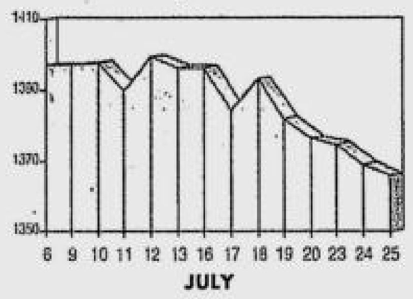
Decliners outpaced gainers 52 to 28, with 42 stocks unchanged, on volume of P472.19 million.

Cosmos, the country's second largest soft drinks firm, was the most actively traded stock, jumping 60 centavos to P5.30. It accounted for 34 percent of the market's value turnover.

Analysts, however, said overall sentiment was morose over doubts on whether the economy would recover in the second half of the year based on economic and social reforms promised by President Macapagal Arroyo. "In general, the market remained sluggish. The volume is still thin. Confidence will be built over time. The programs proposed by government can't happen overnight. And the market wants concrete results," Calderon said.

"The market is just cautious about everything, the peso, the economy . . . But if you look at which pulled the market lower, it's index heavyweight Ayala Corp.," said BPI Securities stock analyst Roberto Cano. *Reuters*

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

(See stock market report on Page B2)

Mirant, DOE sign pact

MIRANT Philippines yesterday signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Energy for its commitment to light up 53 remote barangays in Mindoro under the "O-llaw" electrification program.

The biggest independent power producer in the country will spend about P53 million for the project.

"We believe that the fundamentals of the Philippine economy remain sound for the long term and we will remain committed to be a significant participant in the development of the local energy market," said Marce Fuller, global president of Mirant Corp.

For his part, Energy Secretary Vincent S. Perez encouraged other IPPs "to take a direct hand in the electrification of barangays in provinces that host their power plants."

According to data from the National Electrification Administration, 7,776 barangays remain without electricity.

The government aims to electrify all of the country's 42,000 barangays by 2004.

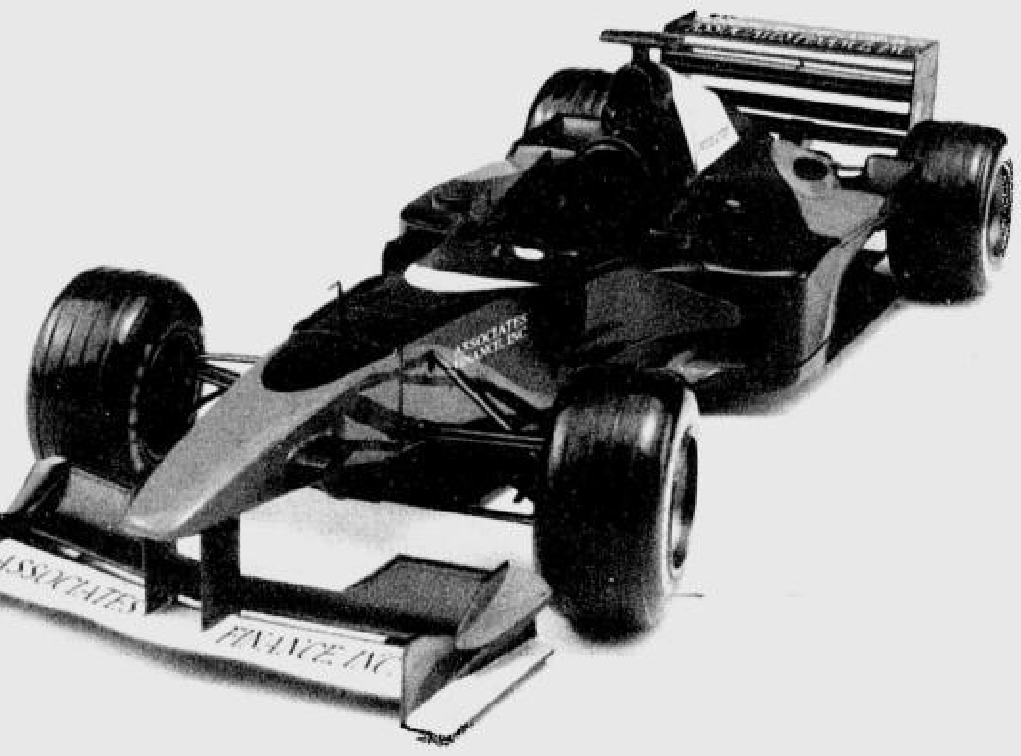
"We plan to energize four barangays a day or 1,500 barangays by end-June of 2002," Perez said.

If this goal is met, 85 percent of all barangays would benefit from the electrification program.

Mirant has previously helped to bring electricity to 45 barangays in Quezon province and another 45 in Camarines Sur.

Several other IPPs have also agreed to help in lighting some 1,500 barangays.

Earlier this month, Toledo Power Corp. signed a memorandum of agreement with government agencies and a local electric cooperative to energize 10 barangays.



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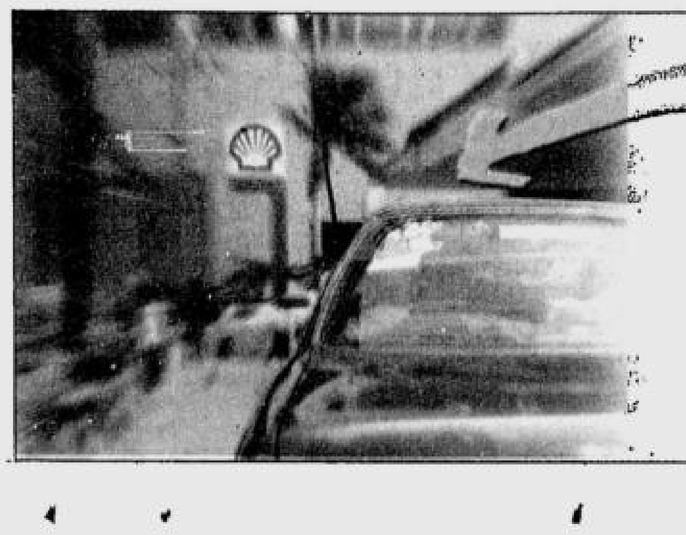

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GOV'T AS REHAB OVERSEER

Tan wants to keep PNB stake

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

TAIPAN Lucio Tan is not giving up part of his 67-percent stake in Philippine National Bank in favor of the State and is only willing to yield management control so the government could help turnaround the bank's finances.

INQUIRER sources said that contrary to what the government had been claiming, the taipan was insisting on retaining ownership control of the country's sixth largest bank, which is saddled with huge non-performing loans.

PNB chair Norberto Nazareno yesterday admitted that Tan has not agreed to cut his stake in PNB so that the government could boost its 16-percent ownership back to less than 51 percent.

"There is nothing definite in that issue yet. We want to come to terms with him on that issue in the next two weeks," said Nazareno, who is also president of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

The PNB chair said that the government and Tan's group has only agreed "to let the State have a more direct hand in the rehabilitation of PNB."

"What we have yet to determine is how much equity the government can buy and at what price," Nazareno said. But this issue would only be answered if or when Tan finally agrees to give up part of his equity in favor of the government.

Sources claimed the taipan had been stalling efforts of the government to come up with a "compromise" on the issue of the reverse privatization or re-nationalization of the bank.

Since mid-May, the government led by Nazareno had been negotiating with the taipan's lawyers. The government earlier thought Tan had agreed to the plan after one of his advisers, a former central bank governor, noted that the plan of the government to retake control of PNB was sound.

The government wanted to retake less than 51 percent of PNB through the conversion into equity of the P15 billion and P10 billion in loans extended respectively by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and PDIC to the ailing bank last October.

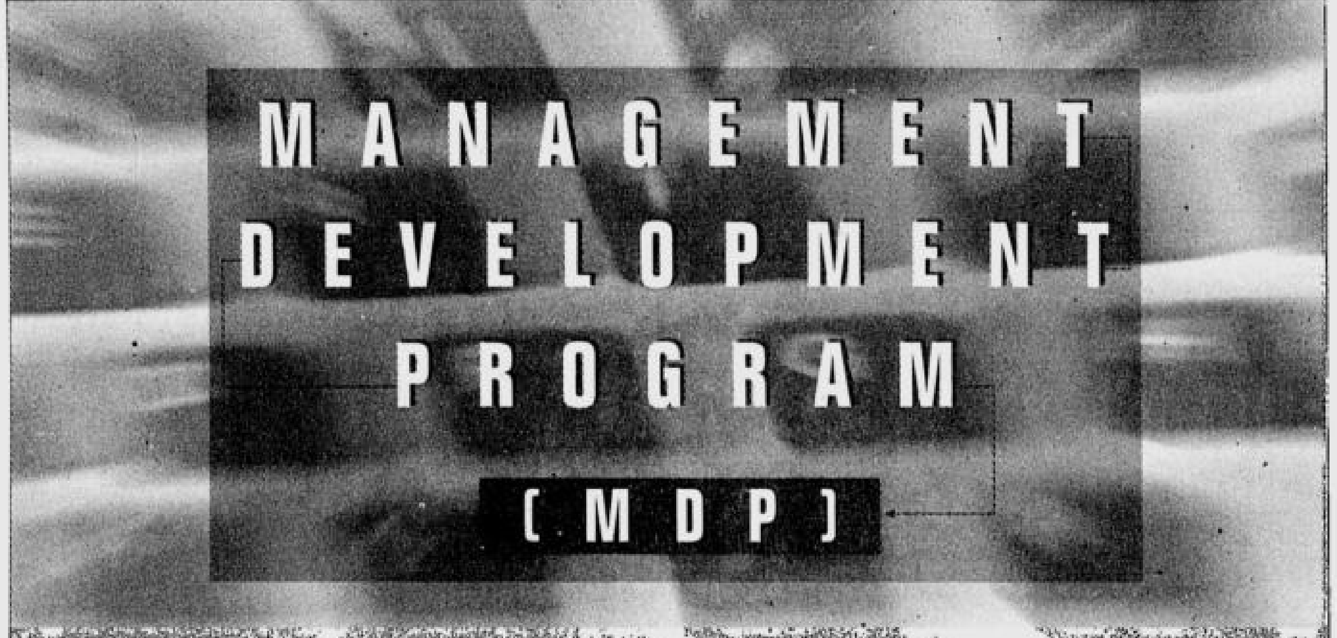
The plan, dubbed as a re-nationalization or reverse privatization, would consequently reduce Tan's stake close to a minority position. After the government has turned PNB's operations around, it will sell its stake to keep its promise to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank that the government would get out of PNB.

The government was diluted to only 16 percent in PNB from 30.4 percent while the taipan gained majority last September when Tan infused P10 billion into the bank.

PNB shares had been trading below P45 each or less than a third of the taipan's investment cost.

Last year, PNB posted a net loss of P5.97 billion from an earlier estimate of only P1 billion.

ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT



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Dr. Patricia L. Lontoc, who holds the Don Andres Soriano Chair in Business History, is the Associate Dean for International Relations and Co-publisher and Editor-in-Chief of The Asian Manager. As such, she oversees the Public Affairs, Publications, Placement and Alumni Relations Departments as well as AIM's activities in Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the United Nations (UN) like the Asia-Europe Management Programme, the APEC International Quality Assurance Systems (ISO 9000 and ISO 14000) Project; and UNESCAP Centres of Excellence Project. She is Core Faculty in the Center for Development Management teaching Economics, Strategic Management, Project Monitoring and Evaluation, and Privatization. She co-authored The Asian Manager Anthology, "Asian Management toward ISO 9000 and ISO 14000".

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AIM EXECUTIVE EDUCATION and LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER

Prospective investors eye Itogon

By DORIS C. DUMLAO

INTERNET upstart Philweb.com Inc. businessman Roberto Ongpin is talking with six groups, including businessman Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco, for possible investment in dormant mining firm Itogon Suyoc Mines Inc.

Ongpin told reporters after the annual ISMI stockholders' meeting yesterday that his group has started discussions with new investors to boost the company's bid to shift to the information technology business.

"It is premature to talk about any project at this time," Ongpin said, noting that Cojuangco was only "one of the six groups we are in discussions with."

"There are many of them who are interested but we haven't signed any agreement," Ongpin said.

Cojuangco owns Philippine Multimedia Systems Inc., the only company offering direct-to-home services in the Philippines. It has invested more than P1 billion in a service it launched last April dubbed as "Dream Broadcasting System."

Direct-to-home service is essentially a video and data service using satellite technology. It is a cheaper alternative to the traditional coaxial cable used by cable television as it uses setup boxes and small satellite dishes to make the system work.

There has been a lot of speculation in the stock market that ISMI might be used as a backdoor listing vehicle for Cojuangco's satellite TV business.

During the stockholders' meeting, Ongpin and two other Philweb officials were elected directors of ISMI—Jaime Gonzales and Philweb president Alex Villamar. Ongpin also said he would soon be elected chair of the company's board of directors as part of the deal with the Ortigas family, which controls ISMI.

ISMI earlier signed a memorandum of agreement to sell about 40 percent of ISMI to Philweb at a par value of one centavo per share. ISMI, however, is still seeking clearance from the Philippine Stock Exchange, which limits the price discount at which a publicly listed company can sell additional shares.

As of press time, the PSE has yet to decide whether to exempt ISMI from the regulation against the offering of shares at a discount beyond 10 percent of a listed company's average market or its book value, whichever is higher. Otherwise, a stock rights offering must be conducted to prevent the unfair dilution of the holdings of other shareowners.

Ongpin said the stockholders' structure of ISMI would be finalized once the group has identified the projects needed for its conversion into an IT company.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, July 25, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	6,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	69	67.5	67.5	182,800
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	410
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	36	36	36	67,300
First E-Bank Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	6,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	204	208	203	206	54,380
Philippine National Bank	40	40	39.5	40	400
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	80,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	210	220	210	218	480
Manulife Financial Corp.	1450	1465	1450	1460	5,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1280	1285	1280	1285	7,090
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	39	39	38.5	38.5	3,200
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.49	790,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	670	670	670	670	1,100
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.037	0.038	0.037	0.038	4,300,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	30,060,000
Piltel	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	80,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	665	675	665	670	26,130
Ivantage Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	30,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.034	0.034	0.033	0.033	35,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	6,500
Manila Electric Co. B	47	47	47	47	18,000
Petron Corp.	1.96	1.98	1.94	1.94	1,740,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	60,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.24	1.24	1.2	1.2	501,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.12	909,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	7,560,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	100,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	50,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	194,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.02	2.02	2	2	15,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.75	5.5	4.75	5.3	30,908,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.75	13.5	13.75	127,800
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26.5	27	26.5	27	167,700
RFM Corp.	2.1	2.42	2.1	2.36	13,428,000
San Miguel Corp. A	43	43	42.5	43	67,700
San Miguel Corp. B	56	56.5	56	56.5	718,600
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.74	0.74	0.7	0.7	140,000
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.2	6.2	10,187,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	327,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10.75	11	10.75	10.75	800
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.22	1.24	3,654,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.52	450,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	213,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	60,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	12	10	12	5,200
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.74	1.76	7,862,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	220,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.115	0.11	0.115	1,330,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	31.5	31.5	31	31	161,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.16	1.2	71,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	2,000
Keppel Phil. Holdings	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1,100,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.52	10,837,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	2,300,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	1,600,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.68	0.7	0.68	0.7	3,100,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	110,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	2,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	5	5	4.8	5	22,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.2	6	6	35,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	130,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.24	0.22	0.24	620,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	12,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	20,000
Music Corp.	1.7	1.74	1.7	1.72	152,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.73	0.75	0.73	0.75	550,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	200,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.87	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	74,700
Steniel Manufacturing	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	70,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	1,850,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	1,070,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.44	0.46	0.44	0.46	280,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	350,000
Philippine Racing Club	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	39	39	39	39	200
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	495	495	495	495	510
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	342,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	53,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10	10	10	10	3,000
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.018	0.018	0.016	0.017	48,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.85	781,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	400,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.245	1,220,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	2,080,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.02	2.04	2.02	2.02	1,765,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	190,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	240,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2	2	2	2	10,000
SM Development Corp.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	270,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	420,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
Urbancorp Realty Dev. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.4	160,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	32,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	9,000,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	6,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.7	1.7	1.2	1.2	20,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.05	0.0525	0.049	0.049	37,100,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.18	630,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	130,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	54,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	17,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	9,600,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.46	550,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	350,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	3,200,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0046	0.005	0.0046	0.0048	29,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.005	0.0048	0.0048	15,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	120,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	40,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	750,000

DISCLOSURES

ALLIANCE Global Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 22 at 9 a.m. at The Richmonde Hotel, Ortigas Center, Pasig. Record date is on June 1.

* * *

BHI Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 20 at 10 a.m. at the 18th floor, The PearlBank Center, Salcedo Village, Makati. Record date is on June 25.

* * *

SQL* Wizard Inc. is not aware of any information that have caused the unusual movement in the trading of its shares last July 24.

* * *

THE DECLASSIFICATION of **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.'s** shares will be reflected in the exchange's computer system on July 27. The stock symbol of the declassified shares will be "RCB."

* * *

ELECTED directors of **Centro Escolar University** were Lourdes Echauz, Rosita Navarro, Carmelita E. Lao, Ernesto Echauz, Lucila Echauz, Corazon Tiongco, Jose Ledesma, Antonio Picazo and Victoria Tamayao.

* * *

SWIFT Foods Inc. confirmed that the quarterly cash dividend on its preferred shares is P0.4033 per share. Date payable is on Aug. 7 and record date is set on July 24.

* * *

ALASKA Milk Corp. purchased 30,000 AMC shares at P2.04 per share and 20,000 AMC shares at P2.02 per share last July 24. This is for the company's stock buy back program.

Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor

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Intel science fair stresses importance of technology among Filipino youth

THE ABILITY to use computers has become indispensable to educational, career, social and cultural advancement. Technology literacy is now a "must" skill and a basic job requirement. But even with a growing part of the national and global economy depending on the technology sector, few students— surprisingly even in the US are entering these careers.

In the Philippines, the Intel Philippine Science Fair, one of the key Intel innovation in education programs in the country, is encouraging students to take up science and technology-related courses in order to give education the high-tech lift it needs for the country to progress.

Intel innovation in education is a global multi-million initiative to prepare students as well as teachers for tomorrow's scientific and technological demands.

About the fair

The Intel Philippine Science Fair is full-funded by Intel and organized by the Department of Science and Technology-Science Education Institute (DOST-SEI) in cooperation with the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS). The fair, which started in 1996, is an annual nationwide competition to discover and recognize the country's best student-scientists.

More than getting students interested in science and math (the pillars of the technology wave), however, the Intel Philippine Science Fair gives them a chance to earn international recognition in the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Intel Isef). The Intel Isef is the world's largest science fair, drawing thousands of students from more than 47 countries, including the Philippines.

Since the Intel Philippine Science Fair's inception, thousands of students from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao have joined and thousands more are joining every year. As a result, the fair has become the largest science project competition after only a short span of four years.

An award-winning program

Apart from being the country's largest gathering of the brightest student-scientists, the Intel Philippine Science Fair is also known as the most prestigious. To date, it has won three Anvil Awards: the Grand Anvil in 2001 and the Anvil Award of Excellence in 1999 and 2000.

The Grand Anvil is the most coveted recognition given to a public relations program which has created a tremendous impact not only on its target audience but the general public as well. The Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines is considered the "Oscar" of the PR industry.

FOLK DANCE TROUPE CELEBRATES ITS 55TH YEAR

THE PHILIPPINE Barangay Folk Dance Troupe will celebrate its 55th years of existence on July 28, with a show at the Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo of the Cultural Center of the Philippines. Highlights of which is the "Pasasalamat Sa Mga Kuya At Ate ng Barangay Folk Dance Troupe," a Tribute to the Alumni of troupe. This "Pasasalamat" will also showcase the choreography of the troupe that was the result of research studies of unrecorded dances and music of less accessible areas. Dances like Guryon, Bajo Los Cocoteros, Tagtag and Salubungan will be staged for the first time. Dr. Paz-Cielo A. Belmonte, founder of the dance troupe and a CCP Gawad Awardee and at the same time Centennial Awardee Para Sa Sining At Kultura will award the Certificates of Recognition to the Outstanding Alumni. Artistic Director of the show is Mr. Eugenio C. Ticzon, while Lamberto SA Cruz, Allan Concepcion, Christopher Benavidez and Ramel Pingcas are the choreagraphers, dance masters and researchers.Chairman of the Anniversary celebration is Christopher Crispe.For ticket reservation call up tel. 563-0179.

MEDICAL CENTER
Department of Obstetrics &

DOH DOC GETS A CHECK-UP

A medical practitioner examines the blood pressure of Department of Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, MD at the general examination booth during the 'Health Promotion Day for Women' at the Megatrade Hall-2, SM Megamall. The booth, sponsored by the Memorial Medical Center Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, was among 20 booths accredited by the DOH which provided free health consultations and medical services. The event was organized by the DOH in cooperation with Unilever Phils., makers of New Lifebuoy. Up to 60,000 participants attended the event, which was held simultaneously in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Looking on are (standing from right) Dr. Elvira Dayrit and Unilever Philippines chair Howard Belton.

BPI EXPRESS CASH IS 'BEST E-CRD'

The BPI Express Cash card was adjudged the "Best Electronic Card for 2000" at the recent Annual MasterCard Asia-Pacific User Conference in Australia. The Express Cash card bested several other entries in this category for the entire Asia-Pacific region. BPI senior executive vice president Aurelio Montinola III accepted the trophy from MasterCard country head Poch Villa-Real during the launch of the "Fully Loaded Madness" at the Glorietta. With him are (from left) BPI vice president Tessie Tan, BPI senior vice president Nita Claravall and BPI director Fernando Zobel de Ayala. Catch the BPI Express Cash card at the "Fully-Loaded Madness" where it is showcased at the BPI Payment Cards booth together with the Express Teller's EPS and the BPI Credit Cards. BPI biggest Madness ever happens from July 23 to Aug. 2.

MAXESS! PRE-PAID CARDS GO 'UNIVERSAL'

According to a survey by IDC, Lehman Brothers estimates there are approximately 2 million Internet users in the Philippines. Even more significant is the role of Internet Cafes in providing connection and access to the World Wide Web, with over 1,500 Internet cafes in the country. Universe Café is one of today's most popular Internet chains in the country, with 14 outlets in the Metro Manila area. More than just an Internet terminal, they also offer games, fax and printing services, as well as snacks. Maxess! Pre-paid Internet cards will now be available at all Universe Café outlets. Margot Torres (left), Edsamail general manager and Katrina Limcaoco, Universe Café managing director shake hands to formalize their partnership. Maxess! pre-paid cards are available in P100 and P300 denominations offering 4 hours and 12 hours, respectively, of browsing time. That's Internet access for as low as P0.42/minute.

Kimberly-Clark wins pollution control award

FOR its outstanding efforts to control pollution and adopt a comprehensive water recycling program, Kimberly-Clark Philippines Inc. (K-CPI) has been named by the Pollution Control Association of the Philippines Inc. (Pcapi) as one of its "Success Stories" for this year.

K-CPI vice president for mill operations Leopoldo Baylon received the recognition on behalf of K-CPI during the awarding ceremonies held early this month at the Development Academy of the Philippines in Tagaytay City.

Pcapi cited K-CPI for having achieved an 87-percent reduction of its fresh water usage since 1991, 100-percent recycled water in tissue manufacturing and de-inking operations and annual cost savings of around P3.9 million.

Baylon said K-CPI has invested more than P100 million since the early 1990s to upgrade its wastewater treatment facilities and will continue to invest in initiatives to ensure preservation of its surrounding environment.

Last year, K-CPI completed a new wastewater treatment plant which produces treated effluent that is significantly lower than the Discharge Limit Values set in the Laguna Lake Development Authority discharge permit and the Philippine Effluent Regulations of 1990.

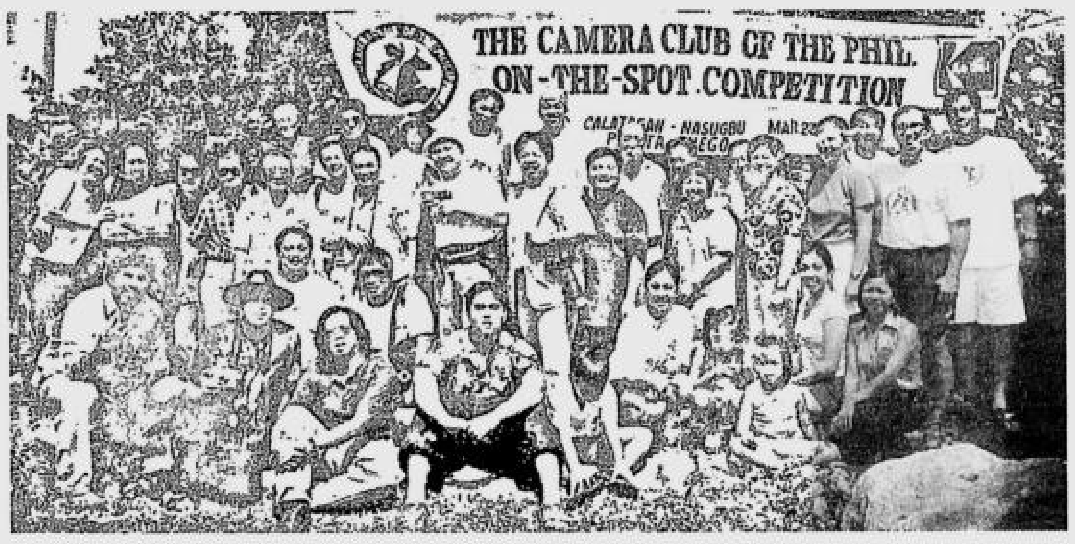
Aside from K-CPI, the pollution control group also cited the National Power Corp. and Coca-Cola Bacolod City Plant as the other "Success Stories" for this year. The awards were handed out by Pcapi in commemoration of Earth Day.

K-CPI is a leading consumer products company, operating in the Philippines for more than 35 years and providing jobs to more than 900 employees. The company is an affiliate Kimberly-Clark Corp., which has operations in 40 countries and sells products in more than 150 countries.

6 2001 9:00 AM

EQUITABLE PCI BANK, MICROSOFT AGREEMENT

Equitable PCI Bank recently signed an enterprise licensing agreement with Microsoft Philippines. This comprehensive software licensing agreement, which covers all Microsoft software used by the Bank, includes maintenance, consultation, training and upgrades of Microsoft products. Through this agreement, Equitable PCI Bank further reiterates its continued compliance with the country's Anti-Piracy Law while obtaining support and updates on present and future Microsoft technologies. The agreement was signed by (seated, from left) Microsoft enterprise business group director Raymond Huang, Microsoft managing director Richard Francis, Equitable PCI Bank SEVP and chief operating officer Edilberto V. Javier, and Equitable PCI Bank SVP and chief technology officer Dennis C. Bancod.



KODAK CUP COMPETITION

The Camera Club of the Philippines had another on-the-spot competition last summer covering the areas of Calatagan, Nasugbu and Puntafuego. Headquartered at Dalampasigan Restaurant the oldest camera club in the Philippines shot scenery with Kodak film over the weekend. All entries are entered for a photo competition sponsored by Kodak Professional Inc.

BITS & Clips

Globe, Sprite call cards

GLOBE Handyphone and Sprite recently launched the special edition Sprite-Globe Handyphone Prepaid Plus Call Card. Available from June 12 to July 27, the special edition call card provides P50 worth of free text or call minutes, usable for Globe Handyphone's prepaid cellphone service. Globe Handyphone prepaid subscribers need only to purchase a P500 denomination Globe Handyphone Prepaid Plus Call Card and present a tape receipt of Sprite products in selected Globe Business Centers, Caltex Starmarts, 7-Eleven convenience stores and selected dealers and specialty shops. The cards are available in more than 400 outlets nationwide. Get a chance to win exciting prizes such as a Nokia 8250, Philips Boomboxes and Nike Timeware watches. The card also serves as a special access pass of cardholders for movie premieres and other events.

'Palm Crazy Sale' at Electronics Depot

MICROWAREHOUSE Inc., the premier distributor of Palm computing products in the country, is holding an inventory clearance sale from July 27 to 29. Dubbed "Palm Crazy Clearance Sale," the promo is held at Electronics Depot, located along E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, across the Eastwood Cyberpark in Libis, Quezon City. Palm users can look forward to significant discounts of up to 60 percent. Electronics Depot will also be holding a series of Palm end-users training simultaneous with the affair. It will be presented in two levels: beginner and intermediate. Individuals and corporate staff may get in touch with Electronics Depot at 637-7340 or 635-2995. For more information about this event, call Microwarehouse at 637-0474 and look for Ana Laher, or e-mail ana@microwarehouse.com.ph.

ROL annual reunion

THE REACHING Out for the Lord (ROL) series of the Tuklasan Sector—Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines will hold its annual reunion and general membership meeting on Sunday, July 29 at the Italia Country Club, BF Resort Village, Las Piñas City. Program starts at 1 p.m. The meeting will be capped by the election of a new set of board of trustees and officers for 2001-2002. A thanksgiving mass will also be celebrated. A fundraising draw will also be held. A P200 annual membership fee will be collected and free afternoon snacks will be served.

Pokemon card game at SM

THE THRILL, excitement and fun of first-rate card game action continue to heat up as the next leg of the popular Pokemon Trading Card Game (TCG) tournament shifts to SM City North Edsa, Quezon City on Sunday, July 29. More than 1,000 Pokemon TCG players—both veterans and beginners—slug it out for top prizes and the honor of qualifying as champion Pokemon trainers. The competition is part of the monthly elimination series that will qualify the winners for the Pokemon TCG grand national finals to be held on Dec. 22 at the Megatrade Hall 2 of SM Megamall. A "must-see" attraction for kids are the guest appearances of Pikachu, one of the most popular Pokemon characters, and Togepi, the newest addition to the Pokemon family of pocket monsters, who will both perform during the affair.

UST Hospital observes diabetes week

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Hospital's Saint Thomas Diabetes Center observes Diabetes Awareness Week on July 22 to 28 with the rest of diabetes centers nationwide. The celebration, themed "I must, I can, I will fight Diabetes," aims to underscore the need for a wider and deeper understanding of diabetes and to know the proper diet, foot care, and prevention of complications. To commemorate the event, the center will hold several activities such as an art exhibit at the pay hospital lobby, free blood sugar and cholesterol screening, free ECG and lectures on diabetes. For inquiries, call UST Hospital St. Thomas Diabetes Center at 781-0802 or 731-3001 loc. 2455.

Katha presents 'Kakaibang Pop'

KATHA, the organization of Filipino composers, presents "Kakaibang Pop: A Different Taste of Contemporary Pinoy Music" featuring Grace Nono, Cynthia Alexander, Noel Cabangon and surprise guests. The concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. on July 27, Friday at the Music Museum in Greenhills, San Juan. Tickets are available at all TicketWorld outlets in National Bookstore and the Katha office. Call [illegible] 707 or 0917-5292933.

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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **ARSENIO F. MATIAS** has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs with Doc. #46, Page #11, Bk #114 under the Notary Public of Gregorio D. Davis Jr. of Makati City.
(PDI-July 26, Aug. 2 & 9, 2001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **CHAN CHUN KIT** has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs on July 13, 2001 under Doc#388, Page#79, Book#14, Series of 2001 before Notary Public Atty. Antonio U. Gonzales of Makati City.
(PDI-July 19, 26, & Aug. 2, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Meralco A Stock Certificate No. 574576 under the name of FELICIANO P. GAMMAD was lost.
(PDI-July19, 26 & Aug.2,2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS
The following stock certificate of **Mr. JANGIN HO has been declared lost Orchard Golf & Country Club Cert # B 0 0 3 1**
(PDI-July 12, 19 &26,2001)

PERSONAL

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O most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine splendor of Heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God. Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this necessity, Oh star of the sea help me and show me, herein you are my Mother Oh Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech You from the bottom of My Heart to succor me in this necessity there are none that can withstand Your power. Oh show me herein You are Mother.

Oh Mary, conceived without sin. Pray for us who have recoursed to thee (3x).

Sweet Mother, I place this cause in Your hands (3x).

Thank you for Your mercy toward me and being mine.

Thank you Mama Mary for answering my prayers. Amen.

(This prayer must be said for three days and after three days, your request will be granted and the prayer must be published.)

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever Amen.
Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.
St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.
Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day. It has never failed.
Thank you very much. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

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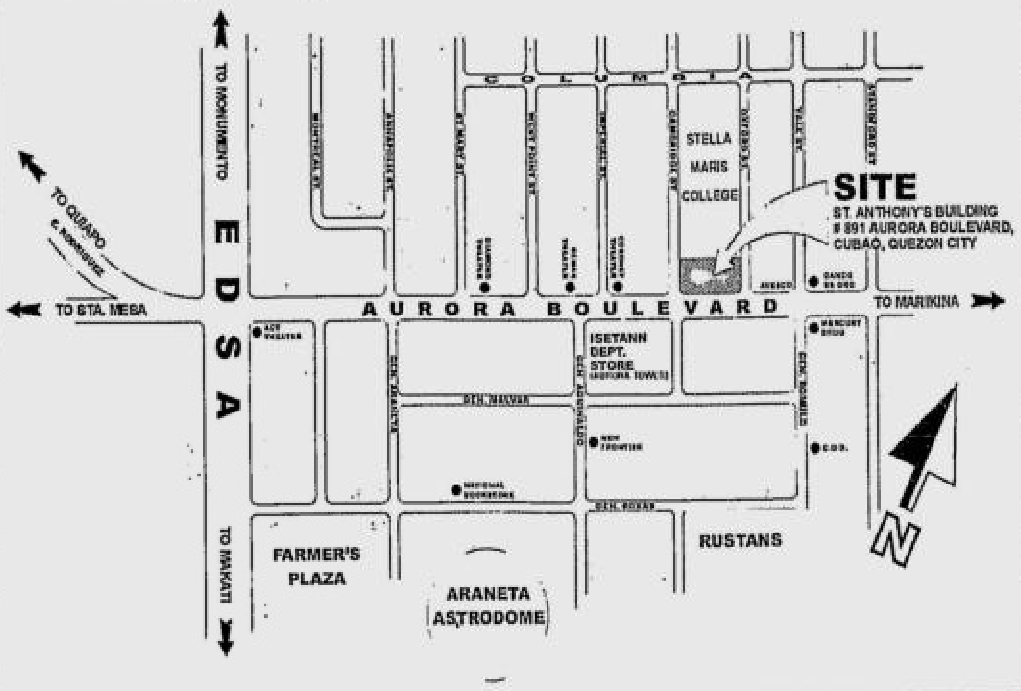
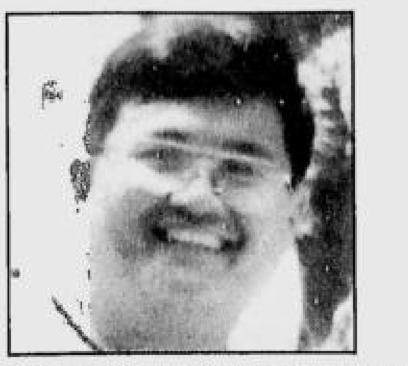


NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



Please be informed that the Regional Trial Court of Quezon City, Branch 100, had issued a **WARRANT OF ARREST** dated June 27, 2001 against NOEL BASA CO, whose picture appears above, and is a resident of 127-B Brgy. Holy Spirit, Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. NOEL BASA CO is charged of "ESTAFA" before said Court, but is currently at-large.

Any transaction entered into by him for and in behalf of ANLOY TRADING CORP. effective June 5, 2000 shall not be honored by the Company. Kindly relay any information as to his whereabouts to:

CARAAN & ASSOCIATES LAW OFFICES
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Tarlac II Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Concepcion, Tarlac

INVITATION TO BID

TARLAC II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (TARELCO II) is inviting interested Bidders to participate in the bidding for Disposal of Non-Performing Assets, to wit:

LOT I:
1. Boom Truck, International Harvester - Plate No. CEE-330
2. Boom Truck, Rec. Dodge Line - Plate No. CJV-554
3. ASTRO - Plate No. 554
4. ASTRO - Plate No. 574
5. ASTRO - Plate No. 564

LOT II:
1. Kilowatthour Meters
   a) A-type, assorted
   b) A-type, F72 and F95
   c) S-type, assorted
2. Kilowatthour Meters, assorted (Burned)
3. Tires
   a) Tires - assorted sizes
   b) Motorcycle tires
   c) Boom Truck tires with flaps and interior, 14 ply size 1000x20, Sime Darby

All interested bidders may visit TARELCO II Office at San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac on July 30, 2001 for inspection purposes. Bidders are advise to pay a non-refundable amount of P500.00.

DATE OF BIDDING - August 03, 2001

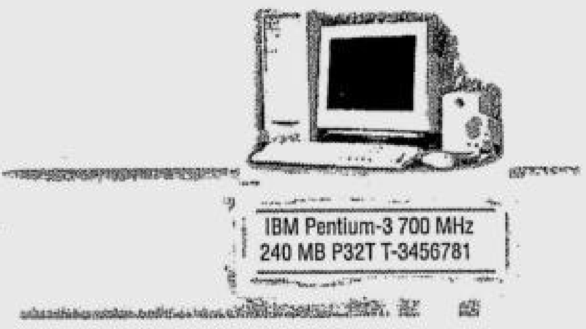
SEALED BIDS shall be received only and opened on **August 03, 2001** at 10:00 a.m. at TARELCO II Main Office, San Nicolas, Concepcion, Tarlac.

Award shall be made to the highest responsible and complying bidder submitting the highest bid. For more information, please contact Mr. Jose D. Tapnio, Tarelco II PBAC Chairman at Tel. No. (045) 923-0449.

TARELCO II reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality therein and to accept/reject such bids that may be considered and found most advantageous to coop.

ENGR. ROMEO C. MACALINO
General Manager

(PDI - July 23 & 26, 2001)



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INQUIRER
TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Cheers!

Q. What's the difference between alcohol, liquor, liqueur, and wine?

A. *Alcohol* is the intoxicating element in fermented beverages such as wine, beer or spirits, and is the result of the fermentation of various carbohydrates such as grain, starch, sugar, molasses, etc. *Liquor* is an alcoholic beverage that is mildly distilled (purified by vaporization and condensation), such as whiskey or rum, or spirituous (strongly distilled and usually containing more alcohol), such as gin. Colloquially, the word 'alcohol' is often used in place of 'liquor.' *Liqueur* is any sweet, often syrupy, highly flavored spirituous drink, such as absinthe or Chartreuse, often served as an aperitif. Finally, there's *wine*, which is the fermented juice of grapes. Wine can be white or red, sugary or not (sweet or dry), and 'strengthened' with alcohol.

For the Record. The salt in sea water comes mainly from the fresh water that flows into the sea. As rivers and streams flow across the land, they absorb a lot of salt from rocks and the earth, and they carry this salt out to sea. There the fresh water evaporates, leaving the salt deposits behind.

A Friendly Reminder. Keep in mind that when a tidal wave is about to hit a coastline, the water first recedes all the way to the horizon. This means that an unwitting, adventurous person could walk out several kilometers before the wave came smashing ashore at terrific speed.

WORD WATCH

Ilog : from the Javanese *ilu*, 'saliva.'

PDI -- July 26, 2001

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

MAKE IT PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO QUALIFY AND BID

The Pre-qualification Bid and Award Committee on Information Technology Resources (PBAC-ITR), of the Department of Trade and Industry, invites prospective bidders to qualify and bid for the following requirements:

1. **GTEB - Internet Service Provider (ISP)**
2. **PTTC - Computer and Peripherals Network Cabling**

Document can be secured from Mr. Celso R. Aguilar, Secretary, DTI-PBAC-ITR, General Services Division, Ground Floor Trade and Industry Building, 361 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

Pre-bidding Conference will be held on August 3, 2001, 1:00 PM at 5th Floor MIS Conference Room, DTI Building.

THE COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS AND WAIVE ANY DEFECT THEREIN.

(Sgd.) **JESUS L. MOTOOMULL**
Chairman, DTI-PBAC-ITR

(PDI -- July 26, 2001)

OBITUARIES

MARCELINO REYES ALVAREZ

of Manggahan, Pasig City

Died in the Grace of our Lord at the age of 59.

His bereaved wife **Herminia Escame Alvarez**; children and in-laws **Ruel, Melody & Eduardo, Elmer & Marlon, Emil & Ayeen, Luis & Luz**; grandchildren **Emerson, Mica, Jas** and **Francis**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Paket Santiago Memorial Homes, corner E. de la Paz and V. Gomez Streets, San Roque, Marikina City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, July 28, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park Crematorium, after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Abandoned Parish Church, Marikina City.

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The Management and Staff
of Somo Memorial Homes, Inc., Iloilo City
regret to announce the demise of
our beloved Chairperson, Board of Directors

VIRGINIA SOLDEVILLA SOMO

who now peacefully rests in the
infinite grace of our Lord on July 11, 2001
at the age of 87.

Together with her late husband **Teodorico** (†); children **Teodorico Jr.** (†), **Eduardo** (†) and **Leilani, Rogelio** (†) and **Emalina, Arturo** and **Marilou, Virteo** and **Conpe, Alejandro** and **Lily Lynn, Mercy** and **Doy, Sylvia, Virgilio**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends request your prayers for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Somo Memorial Homes, Iloilo City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 28, 2001 at the Christ the King Memorial Park after the 2:00 PM service at the Central Philippine University Church, Jaro, Iloilo City. A Requiem Mass will be offered at 9:30 AM on July 28, 2001 at the Somo Memorial Homes.

Elena Leonore Gonzalez-de Castro

Rejoined her husband **Ruben de Castro**,
her parents **Teodoro L. Gonzalez** and
Juliana Soriano-Gonzalez
on July 25, 2001.

She is survived by her bereaved children
RUBEN JR. (†) and **Lourdes Cruz**,
MERLE and **John Whitaker**, **MELIN** and **Francis Javillonar** (†),
MYRNA and **Sonny Piñon**, **ARMAND** and **Malou Hizon**.

She was a loving grandmother to **Artrie** (†),
Michelle and **Orland de Castro**; **Elaine Whitaker**; **Don, Earl,**
Pai and **Emir Javillonar**; **Erwin** (†), **Samantha,**
Jacqueline and **Eryk Piñon**; and **Kathleen,**
Arjo and **Carlo de Castro**.

Her mortal remains lie in state at Sta. Rita Parish Church
in Phil-Am Homes, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 29, 2001 at
Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina after
the 9:00 AM Mass.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones the following establishments can help you.

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FULLY LOADED MADNESS

The Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) is making waves on its 150th anniversary this year. One of the activities prepared by the bank for its clients is the "Fully Loaded Madness" at the Glorietta from July 23 to Aug. 2, 2001. Glorietta is housing together for the first time fully loaded promos, offers, discounts, prizes and surprises. Various booths showcase BPI's products and services: BPI's payment cards and Express Teller's EPS; Internet banking with Express Online, BPI Direct, ExpressLink and BPI Trade; BPI Family Bank Auto and Housing Loans, and insurance from Ayala Health, Ayala Life, Ayala Plans and FGU. Opening the BPI's Fully Loaded Madness are (from left) BPI senior executive vice president Aurelio Montinola, BPI director Fernando Zobel de Ayala III, Insurance Commissioner Eduardo Malinis and Alfonso Salcedo, president of BPI Inscos.

Gov't seen to raise P42B in new borrowings in July

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration plans to raise about P42 billion in new foreign and local borrowings next month from the issuance of two distinct dollar-linked instruments.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the government could get as much as P30 billion from the offering next month of a low-yielding two- and three-year debt papers to be paid at the prevailing exchange rate at the time of the maturity.

Yesterday, the government signed an P11.81-billion fixed-rate borrowing deal with 19 foreign and local lenders led by HSBC. The money to be released on Aug. 1 will be converted on the same day into an HSBC borrowing worth $220.4 million.

Camacho said this was the first-of-its-kind deal that the government has entered into. "We hope to receive other creative proposals to finance our needs," he said.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said the fixed-rate borrowing arranged by HSBC was obtained at a favorable spread of 1.7 percentage points for the three-year instruments and 1.9 percentage points for the five-year instruments over six-month London Interbank Offered Rate.

The prevailing rate for the three- and five-year borrowings in the market command spreads of 3.25 percentage points and 4.25 percentage points over Libor, respectively.

Edeza said the national government was able to save $18.8 million or more than P1 billion in interest payments because of the favorable pricing. "If we had borrowed dollars from the foreign market, the investors would have factored in sovereign as well as emerging markets risks," he said.

HSBC said the 19 institutions that pooled the P11.81 billion in funds would earn a yield of 14 percent for the three-year notes and 14.25 percent for the five -year instruments.

Of the total amount tapped, 53 percent will have a three-year tenor while the remaining 47 percent will carry a five-year maturity. Investors said the yield on the peso instrument was attractive enough to merit their participation.

Edeza said the investors need not pay withholding taxes for the new instrument but the transaction would be slapped a 35-percent corporate income tax as well as a 5-percent gross receipts tax.

HSBC said it had agreed to arrange the borrowing because it could manage the risks involved in the transaction.

"We know the kind of risks and we could price it (the borrowing) properly because we are here. By taking on the borrowing, HSBC demonstrates its confidence in the Philippines," said Joel Consing of HSBC.

The finance chief said the government would finalize "very soon" a two-and-three-year debt papers that would give investors a chance to hedge.

The new borrowing is being arranged by RCBC Capital, Multinational Investment Bancorporation, and Deutsche Bank.

Mindanao still deemed as good investment area

DIGOS CITY—Despite the Abu Sayyaf crisis and the perceived worsening peace and order situation, Mindanao is still a sound area for investment, a ranking development agency official said.

Randolph Parcasio, administrator of the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA), said foreign investors have expressed their willingness to infuse money into "big-ticket and labor-intensive projects" in the island.

"During our preliminary and exploratory talks on investment possibilities, these investors said they are not at all threatened by the existence of the Abu Sayyaf," Parcasio said.

He said the foreign investors, whom he said represent large companies in the United States, the Middle East and the Asean, were more keen on the promises of Mindanao, particularly its economic potentials.

"(Because of this), they have reconsidered earlier plans to go elsewhere," he said.

Parcasio said the SPDA has briefed the investors about "the true situation in Mindanao" and that they understood that the trouble is limited to some areas and "has little effect on the productivity and the tranquility of the island as a whole."

Among the areas being eyed for development by the investors are the agriculture and the export industries.

"(And) they are open to long-term and large-scale investments," he said.

Parcasio said being a development agency created by a presidential decree about 26 years ago, SPDA has full powers to undertake effort to generate investments in the island.

"SPDA is fully clothed with power to generate and make investments that would enhance the economic progress of Mindanao," he said.

He also bared that project tie-ups with the foreign investors particularly on efforts to put in place more development projects are underway.

"Project tie-ups are in the works. It may only be just a matter of time before we see the entry of development projects that will help raise the quality of life of Mindanaoans," Parcasio said.

At least 26 corporate programs and projects all over the island are included in this project tie-up.

These are mostly found in the provinces of Zamboanga, Misamis, Davao, Cotabato, Lanao areas and even in crisis-stricken Sulu and Tawi-tawi.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

MERRILL LYNCH STUDY

Property market to recover in 2004

By Doris C. Dumlao

IT WILL likely take the local property market three more years to recover from the slump experienced since the Asian currency turmoil, according to a study by foreign broker Merrill Lynch Securities Philippines Inc.

A study on the property markets in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, authored by Merrill Lynch VP for research Alfred Dy, said rents and capital values of properties in the country were expected to bottom out this year but they were seen to remain flat in the next two years.

"It would take quite a while for the overall property market to recover. Recovery in capital values and rents should only start to happen in 2004. We believe that vacancy rates have to fall first before capital values and rents would start to recover," the study noted.

The study said that four years after the Asian financial crisis of 1997, the office sector in these three crisis-hit countries remained sluggish. It noted that the vacancy rate in the Philippines stood at 15 percent while those in Indonesia and Thailand were higher at 22 percent and 31 percent, respectively.

"Vacancies seem to have already peaked in Thailand and Indonesia, and are expected to peak in the Philippines this year," the study said.

It also noted that the oversupply of office space had pulled down capital values and rental rates to less than 50 percent of the peak levels. It, however, projected that the vacancy rates might first fall to single-digit levels before capital values and rental rates would improve. "This is to happen within the next two years," the study said.

The study projected that the vacancy rate in the Makati central business district might increase to 15.3 percent this year and in the Ortigas CBD, to hit 24.9 percent.

"Taken collectively, vacancy rates should hit 17.9 percent in 2001. For 2002, we foresee vacancy rates easing to 12 percent in the Makati CBD, but surging further to 27.7 percent in Ortigas. We expect vacancy rates to be 16.5 percent for both CBDs in 2002," it said.

The study projected that the vacancy rate might fall below 10 percent by 2004—Makati at 5.3 percent and Ortigas at 21.3 percent.

By 2004, the study said that some of the deferred high-rise commercial projects might be revived. These include the Jaka Tower (30,344sq.m.), Westmont Bank Building (35,327sq.m.) and World Commerce Plaza (24,000sq.m.).

"Should implementation of these projects restart in 2002, we expect Jaka Tower to be completed by the fourth quarter of 2003. Westmont Bank and World Commerce Plaza will likely be completed in the third quarter of 2004. We believe this will result in higher vacancy rates of 14 percent in 2003 and 12 percent in 2004. Under this scenario, vacancy rates in both Makati and Ortigas would fall below 10 percent only in 2005," it said.

In Thailand, the study said that in view of improvements seen in the Bangkok office market since early 2000, there could be a recovery in the rental rates as early as 2002 and 2003.

In Indonesia, the study said vacancy rate would likely fall below 10 percent in 2005. It projected that capital values and rental rates in this country would remain lackluster in the years ahead.

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Yacht club chief bucks SBMA plan to put up casino

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

RESTAURATEUR Victor "Vic-Vic" Villavicencio said yesterday he would block plans to put up a casino at the Subic Bay Yacht Club as long as he remained "captain" of the premier Philippine marina.

In a news statement, Villavicencio said he and other club members would never consider a casino or any other form of gambling at the Subic Bay Yacht Club, as they wanted to keep its image as a wholesome destination for vacationers.

Villavicencio was reacting to Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority Chair Felicito Payumo's report that creditor banks of Subic Bay Yacht Club led by Land Bank of the Philippines were planning to put up a second casino or a Las Vegas-type family entertainment center inside the club's premises to ease its cash flow problems.

Subic Bay Yacht Club's 12 creditor banks foreclosed on the flamboyant businessman's P1 billion loans early this year and obtained 40 percent, or 1,200, of the club's 3,000 outstanding shares.

The creditor banks have proposed to name 10 instead of five nominees to Subic Bay Yacht Club's 11-member board ahead of their plan to get interested bidders on Aug. 2.

Villavicencio said these banks were free to sell their shares as long as management was properly informed.

He said Payumo "should have been fully aware that the SBMA had already granted exclusive rights to Legenda Hotels to operate a casino inside (Subic Bay)."

Payumo earlier stressed that his position as commodore was equivalent to the president of a corporation and his Subic Bay Waterfront Development Corp. had a contract to run the club until 2004.

He stressed that SBWDC had a net worth of P1.7 billion and it had no outstanding obligations.

ANTI-NAÑAGAS CAMPAIGN

DOF moves to settle SSS row

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho and Social Security System executive vice president Horace Templo are set to hold meetings to settle a two-month labor-management conflict hitting the SSS.

In an interview, Templo said he would bring to Camacho's attention efforts by SSS employees to oust SSS president Vitaliano Nañagas II. Templo is supporting this demand.

Templo also expressed hope that newly appointed SSS Chair Bernardino Abes would be able to put an end to anti-Nañagas lunch-time protest actions that had interrupted operations at the SSS.

Abes was a labor secretary and SSS chief under former President Diosdado Macapagal, father of incumbent President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Camacho had said he was looking forward to meeting Templo.

Templo earlier backpedaled from a commitment to resign this week, saying his decision to stay on was prompted by appeals from employees of the SSS.

Templo, a career official, is the most senior SSS executive to join the anti-Nañagas lobby.

For over two months, SSS employees have been holding noise barrages and rallies to force Nañagas to step down. They are opposing Nañagas' efforts to privatize the SSS.

In an interview, Ramon San Andres Jr., Alert and Concerned Employees for a better SSS national spokesperson, said the 2,800-strong union scored Nañagas' "tyrannical" and "despotic" management style.

Nañagas has threatened to fire executives who have supported moves to oust him.

San Andres said around 2,600 rank-and-file employees and executives had signed a petition seeking Nañagas' ouster. *Elena R. Torrijos*

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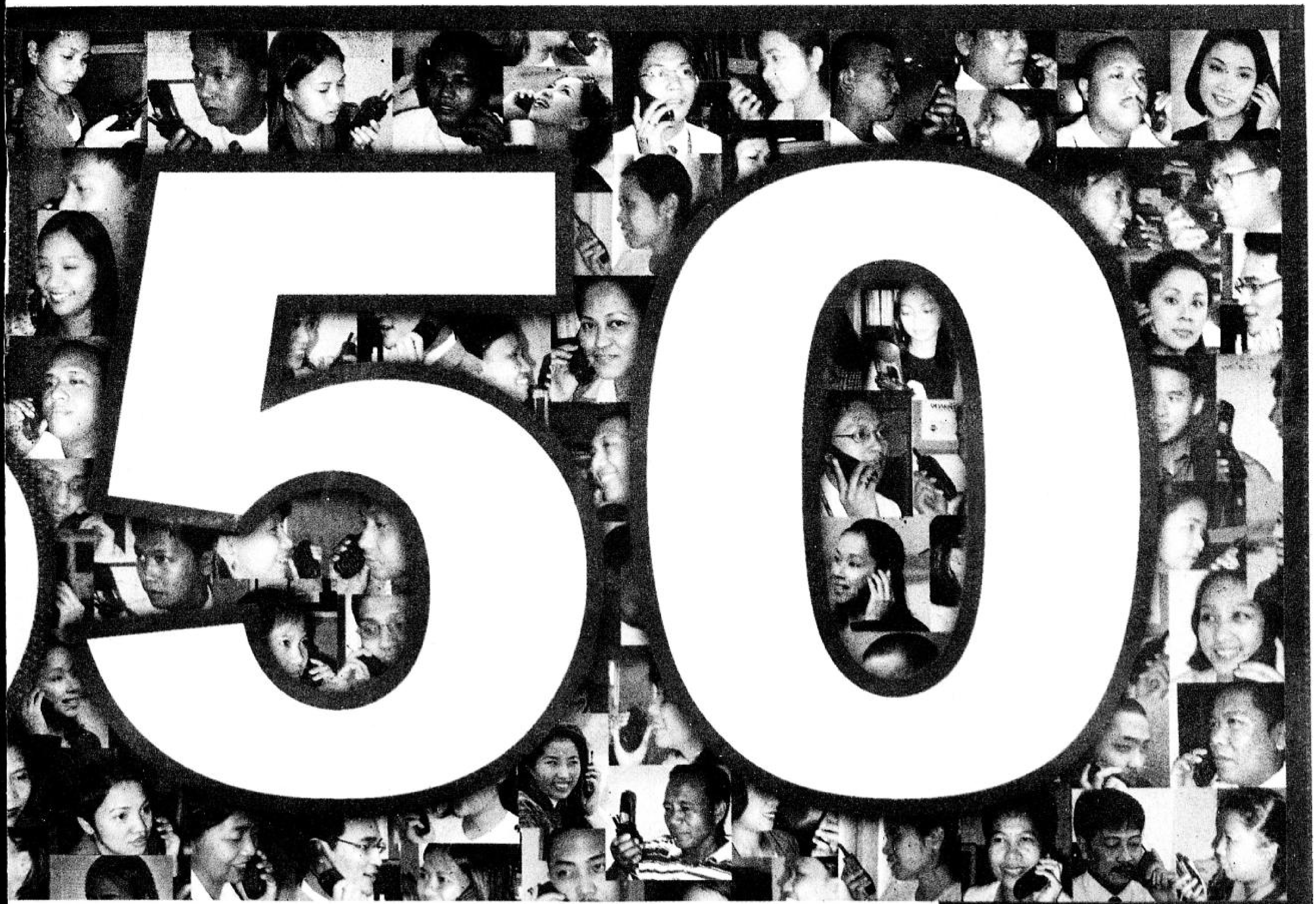

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In loving kindness, please join us in offering the Mass for the eternal repose of

ANTONIO ROA MERCADO

(27 December 1934 - 26 July 2000)

We offer the Mass as well in thanksgiving for the gifts endowed by God on Tony — his talents and vision, his fine and generous heart, his sense of joy. For these abundant graces that You gave Tony in life, Lord, and thereby to us, his family, as well, thank You.

At the time and place convenient to you today, 26 July, the first anniversary of Tony's death, kindly offer the Mass for these intentions along with your own.

Church of Santa Susana Ayala Alabang	6:00am
Church of the Immaculate Conception Los Baños, Laguna	6:00am
Church of St. Therese UPLB Campus, College, Laguna	6:00 am and 5:30pm
Church of San Antonio College, Laguna	6:00 am and 5:30pm
Church of San Agustin Bay, Laguna	6:00 am
Church of San Roque San Pablo, Laguna	6:00 am
Cathedral of San Pablo San Pablo, Laguna	6:15 am and 6:15 pm
Church of St. Joseph the Worker Baguio City	6:15 am
Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament Baguio City	6:30 am
Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Broadway, Quezon City	7:00 am and 6:00 pm
Church of Don Bosco, Main Chapel Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City	9:00 am
Benedictine Abbey Malaybalay, Bukidnon	9:00 am
Boardroom, Publicis-AMA 10/F IBM Plaza, Eastwood, Quezon City	11:00am
Oratory, Woodrose School Ayala Alabang	12:00 noon
Stella Orientis Oratory University of Asia and the Pacific, Pasig City	12:05 pm
Ledesma Hall Makati Medical Center	12:15 pm
Crypt Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel	5:00 pm
Cathedral of Saint Ignatius Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City	5:15 pm
Church of the Holy Redeemer Bangkok, Thailand	5:15 pm
PSEC Chapel Ortigas Center, Pasig City	5:30 pm
Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal 41 Rue du Bac, Paris, France	6:00 pm
Church of Mary Cause of Our Joy Soldiers Hill, Muntinlupa	7:00 pm
St. Patrick Cathedral New York City, USA	12:15 pm (27 July)
Chapel of St. Bernadette Notre Dame d' Auteuil 4 Rue Corot, Paris, France	3:30 pm (29 July)

Acceptance of Death

We, too, O Lord, will die – wherever it shall please You, as it shall please You, and wheresoever it shall please You. Let Your just decrees be fulfilled. Let our sinful bodies return to their parent dust. But in your great mercy as our infinitely loving Father, receive our immortal souls, and when our bodies have risen again, place them likewise in Your kingdom where we may love and bless You as Your beloved children forever and ever. Amen.

Avelino Guico Cariño

of Biñan, Laguna

has peacefully joined his Creator and ***Salud Alintanahin Cariño*** *on July 23, 2001 at the age of 81.*

His bereaved wife **NORIE Alintanahin Cariño**; children **CHERRIE** & husband **NOEL Santos**, **DIDI** & husband **DWIGHT Galsim**, **RAY** & wife **ELYNN Tan Gana**, **GENE** & wife **TRINA Cervantes**, **AILEE** & husband **APRIL Dionela**, and **RACHELLE** & husband **ROBERT Samaniego**; grandchildren **Erwin**, **Edoard**, **Catherine**, and **Christine Santos**; **Sally** & **Raymund Sucgang**, **Marco** & **Gayette**, and **Katrina Galsim**; **Ryan**, **Binky**, and **Beth Cariño**; **Kay**, **Gino**, **Tani**, and **Miles Cariño**; **Matthew Dionela**; great-grandchild **Cathy Sucgang**; and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at St. Michael's Chapel, Segunda Village, Biñan, Laguna (near Biñan Doctors' Hospital).

Interment wil be at the Gonzar Cemetery on Sunday, July 29, 2001 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

"There are many rooms in my Father's house,
and I am going to prepare a place for you."
John 14:2

Engr. PACIFICO RUBIO SANCHEZ

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 24, 2001 at the age of 83.

His loving wife **Amanda**; children and in-laws **Wilfrido** and **Frine**, **Ephraim** and **Ella**, **Veronica** and **David Lim**, **Pacifico Jr.** and **Rosemarie**, **Elizabeth** and **Peter Wintle**, **Anamirela** and **Mark Lontoc**; grandchildren **Ethan Koe**, **Yolanda**, **Ayon**, **Sica**, **Ali**, **Rita**, **Malchus**, **Ezer**, **Arna**, **Ben**, **Ralph**, **Anicka**, **Arianne** and **Adrian**; brothers **Nicodemus** (†), **Edilberto Sr.** (†), **Eriberto**; and sister **Remedios**; relatives and friends, request all who have known him to join in our celebration as he enters eternal life.

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish, Broadway St., New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 28, 2001 at North Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

Please omit flowers. Instead, donations to the Bukas Loob Sa Diyos Covenant House will be greatly appreciated.

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God.
2 Cor. 4:14

COL. JUAN EUGENIO EVANGELISTA ARROYO

"Johnny"

of Candaba, Pampanga

Peacefully joined his Savior on July 23, 2001 at the age of 88.

Quintessential Officer and Gentleman

Loving Husband to his True Love **PRISCILA RINA TINIO**

Beloved Father to
ANGELA and **CESAR VILLANUEVA**, **MAYA** and **FRED SANTIANO** (†),
BONG and **HEINZ STAUB**, **NICKY**, **BUTCH** and **LINCE**,
JOY and **BOBBY GUEVARA**, and **SUSIE**

Super Lolo to
JOCELYN and **BRUCE**; **ARIEL**, **DAX** and **JAM**; **GINO**;
SUGAR, **CARINA**, **CHRIS**, **ADDI** and **BOOM**.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church,
New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

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CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

CAUTION: CONTENTS OVEN-HOT

Toyota Altis competes with Honda Civic, Nissan Grandeur

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

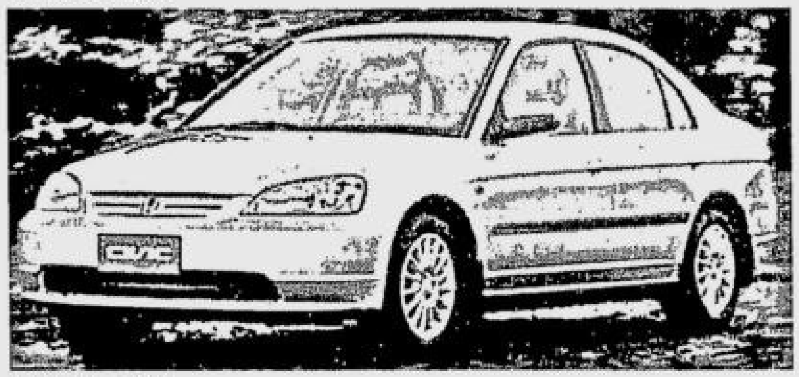
TOYOTA'S strategy to come out with the new Corolla Altis in the middle of the year seems to have worked in its favor. After collecting enough market data to suitably equip the Altis and the Corolla model line with competitive features, Toyota has positioned its sedans for a younger market. A market in need of more flash for its cash and more cubic centimeters around the engine block.

The battle between the newcomers was reignited earlier when Nissan revealed its handsome Exalta Grandeur. Honda's cavernous Civic barely touched the market's surface when the completely refurbished Sentra came out.

Mitsubishi had played it safe and simply introduced the Lancer late in 2000 for an early 2001 release. What looms over the horizon for Lancer is an all-new body-drivetrain configuration, which is already found in most of Japan's cars and in parts of Southeast Asia. Mitsubishi might yet surprise the market with a new toy in the near future.

This comparison pits the latest additions intended to "pump-prime" the sagging sedan market: the 2001 Honda Civic, the Nissan Grandeur and the newest Corolla Altis. To put things in their proper perspectives, we'll discuss each in full trim and all in automatic transmission.

TOYOTA Altis



HONDA Civic

Get motivated

Motivated by three different engine platforms, the three sedans cannot compare by engine fact sheet alone. The Altis displaces 1,794 cc., the Sentra 1,597, the Civic 1,590. Maximum power spread is wider than a direct 1.6- to -1.6 comparison. Toyota's 17Z-FE engine outputs 145 hp at 6,000 rpm. Nissan's revamped GA series, QG16DE pumps out 114 hp @ 6,000 rpm. While Honda's small block VTEC3 extracts 128 hp at a 6,600 top end.

Transmission type has the new Altis 1.8G A/T with super ECT Gate-type shift with power mode selector while the Exalta's 1.6G Grandeur has an A/T with electronic transmission. Civic's 1.6Vti-S has a four-speed AT. In addition, Altis has "Jaguar-like gated shifter" on its Electronically Controlled Transmission while Sentra/Altis have four wheel discs, Honda with disc front, drum rear.

Theoretically, handling chores are best done with sophisticated setups, but all three cars follow simple pivoting controls. Up front it's McPhersons for both the Altis and Sentra and an offset-pivot toe control link for the Honda. In the back it's a simple beam assembly with stabilizers for the Corolla. Nissan retains its sophisticated (dubbed as the best setup for front wheel drive vehicles) Multi-Link Beam suspension. Honda keeps a wishbone-like arm and link setup, which is amazingly as taut and secure as its previous F1 suspension copies.

Parity party

The air-conditioning is almost the same. The comparison sheets under the dealer options showed Altis aircon system on a Nippondenso auto climate control using digital push type controls, the Grandeur a full auto with sunload sensor with digital push type controls and the Civic with HADSYS. Audio system shows Corolla's Fujitsu Ten 2-Din Radio/Cassette/In-dash single CD while Grandeur has Clarion 1-Din Radio/cassette/6-disc CD changer. Honda Civic has Kenwood 1-din radio/Mp-3/In-dash single CD.

The sizes have incremental differences. Dimension comparison shows Altis 1.8G A/T has an L x W x H (mm) of 4,530 x 1,705 x 1,500 while Exalta G Grandeur A/T has 4,470 x 1,710 x 1,440. Meanwhile, Honda Civic 1.6 Vti-S A/T's dimension is 4,435 x 1,720 x 1,455.

There's no significant difference in the wheelbase either. In mm, Altis has 2,600, Grandeur has 2,535 and Civic has 2,620.

In exterior comparisons, the three have multireflector, four-lamp headlights. Sentra, in particular, has four-lamp complex surface reflector or CSR. Outside door handles (grip type) are all color-keyed for the three.

Minimum turning radius? There's not much difference either. Altis has 5.2 meters, Sentra has 4.8 and 5.4 for Civic.

And there isn't much difference in the ground clearances. Altis clears at 180 mm, Exalta at 150 mm, while Civic is at 170 mm.

The steering system's almost the same for the three. For engine chassis comparison, all have shift lock mechanism, front brakes all have ventilated discs while for the rear brakes, the Altis has discs, Sentra uses solid discs and Civic uses drums.

Differences

Altis, expectedly, offers a Global Outstanding Assessment body as one of its safety features. Exalta has a zone body concept/soft roof side rails while Honda has its crumple zone.

The SRS airbag is dual electronic for Altis and Civic, while the left side of the driver of the Exalta has an airbag.

The comparison sheet also shows that only Altis has a whiplash injury lessening (WIL) feature. Altis and Civic both have window jam protection on the driver's side while Exalta has none. Both Altis and Exalta have child lock protection systems.

Only Exalta has a rear back-up sensor. Its Optitron display is nice, but the heads up digispeed counter is an added safety feature, it allows one to peek at the controls without taking their eyes off the road. In addition, Sentra's speed sensing door locks is superb for forgetful drivers.

Only the Civic doesn't have a catalytic converter with its VTEC engines in place.

In the end, what we have are choices, choices and more choices for the Filipino motorist. The real story for these new crop of cars is parity, not difference.

NISSAN Sentra

Prices

Nissan Sentra's prices: Grandeur P875,000, GS P835,000, LS MT P760,000; DS P710,000; DS M/T P680,000.

Honda Civic's prices: VtiS P823,000; VTI at P780,000; VTI MT P745,000; LXI P718,000; MT P688,000.

Toyota Altis' prices: 1.8 AT P898,000; P1.6G AT P832,000; EAT P787,000; EMT P752,000; JAT P727,000; J MT P692,000.

Toyota expects sales to fall 8% this year

BY GIL CABACUNGAN

THE COUNTRY'S leading automotive assembler, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp., is projecting reversal in fortune this year as sales are expected to fall by 8 percent wiping out last year's gains.

Toyota Philippines president Takeshi Fukuda made the gloomy forecast during last week's unveiling of the new Toyota Corolla, its compact sedan model, which it is betting on to regain its leadership position in the passenger car segment held by the Honda Civic.

Fukuda said sales are expected to hit 22,000 units this year from 24,000 units a year ago. This year's sales forecast is marginally higher than the 21,613 units Toyota sold in 1999, when the industry slump hit its bottom.

"We hit the bottom in 1999 and we are likely to make a double dip this year," Fukuda said.

Enthusiasm over the change in administration in January has apparently turned into disappointment as the continued political and security crisis pummel consumer confidence while the peso's weakness jack up costs which assemblers are forced to absorb for fear of further driving away consumers.

On top of these broad problems, Toyota Philippines was forced to close down its plants for more than week due to labor problems which has caused delays in production, particularly of its best-selling Asian utility vehicle model, the Tamaraw Revo.

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) reported a 14.8 percent decline in sales to 35,379 in the first half this year from 41,523 last year. Sales jumped 12.8 percent increase in sales to 83,949 units from 74,414 units in 1999, snapping a 2-year slump.

Despite the gloomy outlook, Fukuda said it was ripe for Toyota Philippines to train its sights on regaining lost ground in the passenger market by introducing the new Toyota Corolla.

Since the financial crisis struck in 1997, Fukuda said Toyota Philippines had to focus on its most salable product, the Tamaraw, in order to weather the storm.

Southeast Asia auto sales rise but lower than expected

SINGAPORE—New vehicle sales in Southeast Asia's four biggest markets rose 9.0 percent in the five months of this year, weighed down by a weak performance in the Philippines, an industry monitor said Tuesday.

The Philippines was the only market to experience a decline with a fall of 15 percent, Automotive Resources Asia Ltd. (ARA) said in its latest report.

New vehicle sales in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines from January to May totaled 400,200 units, up from 367,333 units last year.

"The Thai, Indonesian and Malaysian automotive markets continue to recover at respectable rates, despite the countries' uncertain economic conditions," said ARA associate May Arthapan.

But in the Philippines, "unresolved political and social problems are cutting into consumer confidence," Arthapan said.

Thailand posted the biggest increase in percentage terms, with sales up 14 percent to 112,903 vehicles, while the Malaysian market rose 11 percent to 150,287 and Indonesia was up 9 percent to 108,058 units.

In the Philippines, sales dropped 15 percent to 28,952 vehicles from 34,024 in the same period last year.

The Philippines this year has seen a popular uprising that toppled President Joseph Estrada in favor of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, followed by riots and a march on the presidential palace by 50,000 Estrada supporters after he was charged with plunder which carries the death penalty.

Malaysia's national car Proton remained the most popular make in the four countries with a 20-percent share of the market, followed by Toyota with 15 percent, and Mitsubishi and Isuzu with 11 percent each.

Most of the rest of the market is shared by Malaysia's Perodua and Japanese carmakers Honda and Nissan.

AFP

Talking your way to better auto service

GETTING your vehicle serviced is always a taxing job. Apart from the money it's going to cost you, there are lots of horror stories about repair shops floating around your fertile mind.

With any other conflicts, all can be resolved through better communication, Isuzu Philippines Corp., "your responsible partner," gives us some points to ponder on how to communicate for better auto servicing.

- **Do your homework**—Be prepared to describe your vehicle's problem. Be as detailed as possible. Write down your specific complaint to save time and avoid misunderstanding.
- **Too many cooks spoil the broth**—Fight the urge to recommend your own diagnosis or a particular course of repair. Let the experts handle the job and respect their own decision.
- **Curiosity did not kill the cat**—Do not hesitate to ask questions. It's your vehicle. You deserve to know what they are going to do to it. Be involved in every step of the way. You never know, you might learn a thing or two about vehicle maintenance and simple repairs.
- **Just do it**—Never demand an on-the-spot diagnosis on your vehicle. Technicians need to spot the exact problem to be able to do what needs to be done. Give them ample time to evaluate their findings and plan their specific action before the work ever begins.

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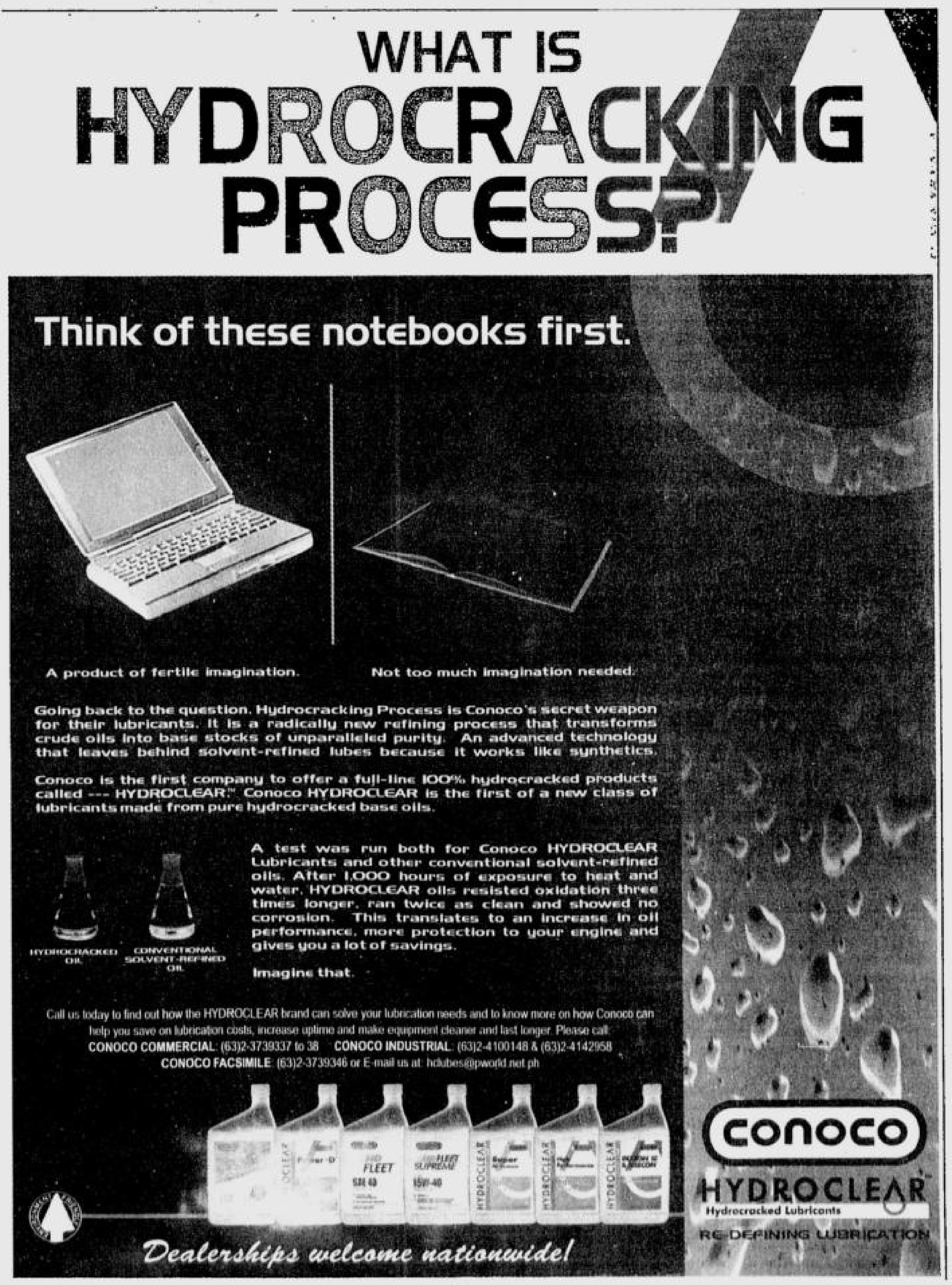

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THINGS NO ONE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT IN F1

Hurrah for the back markers!

BY RAYMOND B. TRIBDINO

IRVIN gets it sideways at Silverstone

JAGUARONLINESPORT.COM

IN FORMULA One, it gets tiresome to see that red car always finish in front of a black-and-silver one over and over again. The unexpected entry of the blue-and-white Williams-BMW-Compaq piloted by Ralf Schumacher broke the ice, and on occasion a green racing suit stood on the lowest podium step. F1 fans would like more unpredictability, but alas the tarmac scraping teams will always have to make its own battles one lap down.

So three cheers for the underdog!

With the F1 season just six races away from closing, here is a quick peek into what we might see from the bottom-of-the-heap teams, struggling to keep up with the big boys.

European Minardi

The 200-meter distance inside the F1 pitlane also illustrates the differences in budget between Ferrari and the struggling European-Minardi team. Schumacher's US$25 million-a-year salary (give or take a million) represents the team's total annual budget.

Minardi epitomizes the real motorsport enthusiast. Perpetually poor. Always tired. But determined.

Powered by old engines and propelled by the love of the sport, the team's drivers, Tarso Marques (F1 returnee and soon to be outcast) and Fernando Alonso (F3 champ turned test driver, turned consistent back marker and lately perennial late-braker) are not exactly the most skilled of pilots.

Combine slow car with not-so-good driver and get constant headaches for front runners. Hey, but their pit stops aren't bad at all. All within the 9- to 12-second bracket. (Except for about three or four flukes that just cost them the race.)

What the wires will say: Alonso Trapped in Gravel (Again For The Third Time). Total points as of Silverstone: none, zero zilch. Does anyone root for Minardi? One. Me.

Orange Arrows

"The future is bright, the future is Orange," runs the corporate tagline of telecom giant Orange. Indeed the future is bright for Orange Arrows with one point in their belt courtesy of Jos "the Boss" Verstappen.

If championship points were determined by the time the track camera follows a car Orange Arrows would be No. 1. In the second race at Sepang, Verstappen first rocketed to sixth from a dismal 12th grid start. Later he tailed and blocked Hakkinen to no end, finally giving up only when he had to preserve his Asiatech engine. That was worth about 14 laps of coverage. Succeeding races saw him either drive along with the top 10, spin out, blow his engine all for television coverage.

Teammate Enrico Bernoldi is fast and sure footed. For a while, he seemed to have been color blind, failing to notice the furiously waving blue flags. This specially irked David Coulthard in one particular race that saw the Arrows battle for 14th place. The move so irked McLaren that Ron Dennis unceremoniously rushed down pitlane to rebuke the Orange shirts.

Arrows Press Release: Jos Voted To Arrows Board; Moving Ads Department. Total points as of Silverstone: One. Most Determined Driver Award: Jos Verstappen. Most irritating back marker award: Enrico Bernoldi. Total points since Silverstone: 1

Benetton-Mild Seven

Jenson Button's transfer to Benetton on loan from Sir Frank Williams was the ultimate hype for a team struggling to get back on top. Seven years ago, Michael Schumacher piloted the Renault-engined Benetton to victory-after-victory, a legacy the struggling team is trying to regain.

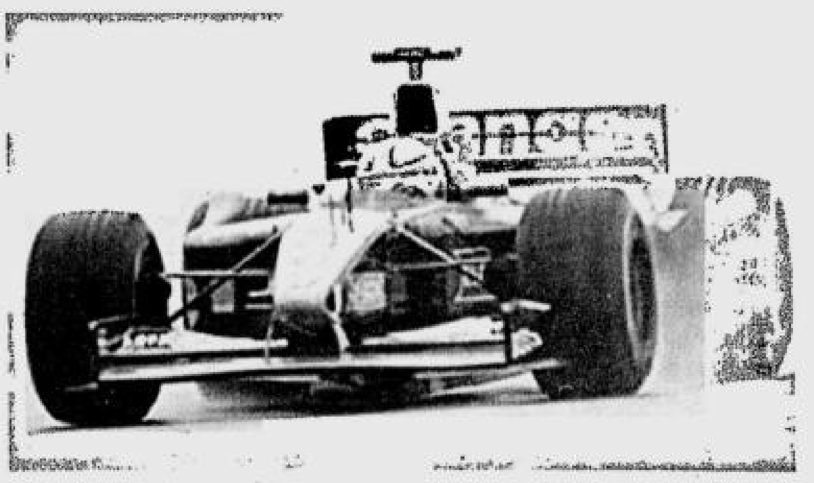
Mike Gascoyne, chief designer of the B201propelled by a Renault RS21 V10 flat engine was thought to have a winning car that would immediately produce good results. Unfortunately the other teams were way ahead of the Benetton in terms of testing and development.

It also helped little that the young and inexperienced Button joined the team. He has had more misfortunes than his Italian teammate Giancarlo Fisichella, who gained the team's sole point. They are however consistent finishers, which does a lot for testing and development of the car.

Benetton Shirts: We Want To Win But Can't Spell The Word. Unofficial Benetton Theme Song: "I Will Survive." Most failed hype for a driver: Jenson Button. Technology points: Renault Flat Engine Technology. Total points since Silverstone: 1

Acer Prost

Proving that a world champion driver does not a championship team make, Alain Prost's F1 team isn't doing much justice to that Ferrari V10 engine pulsating in the back. Okay, it isn't Monsieur Prost's fault entirely. After the San Marino race, Gaston Mazzacane left to be replaced by ex-Jaguar driver Luciano Burti.



QUALIFYING run for Verstappen

Henri Durand was hired at the initial stages of the development of the APO4 race car to take care of aerodynamics. Ferrari commissioned a technical team to help develop the car and these elements should combine to produce a stellar team. But it hasn't.

At Silverstone Alesi finished 11th with a full fuel load and general lack of grip while Burti DNFed at lap 6. But that does not mean the team can't produce results. Not just now. Ages ago it was intended to be an all-French team, but there just aren't enough capable French drivers yet. Generally nebulous and in need of an image-building machinery for the fans, the Prost team still has to prove itself in a big way.

Not-So-Possible Headline: Jacques Villeneuve Moves To Prost. Prost Freebie of the day: Acer engine management software. Most Likely Souvenir at the end of Hockenhiem race: Parts of melted Renault engine. Total points since Silverstone: 3

HSBC Jaguar

If I would be permitted to have a favorite nonwinning team, it would be Jaguar.

Collecting a critical 5 points with a third place win for Eddie Irvine and a sixth place for Pedro de la Rosa (who replaced Luciano Burti midway through the first semester of the 2001 season). With only 28 GPs completed, the team is under tremendous pressure to achieve, having done well in the IMSA, LeMans and other forms of racing.

As Stewart-Ford in 1999, it managed a podium finish in the least desired of styles. The top runners all failed and crashed out of the race, opening the door for Johnny Herbert to take the checkered flag. With Sir Jackie Stewart at the helm and Bobby Rahal as team boss, 2001 was supposed to be a season of victories, at least finishes in the top six spots. But that is not to happen.

Eddie Irvine constantly complains of a slow, punishing car. Pedro de la Rosa just putters along with consistency, completing race after race, unless that darn head gasket disintegrates.

Most Wanted Headline: Jaguar 1-2 at Indy F1. Most Unlikely Headline: Jaguar Wins Constructors Championship. Wished I Stayed With Ferrari Award: Eddie Irvine. Thanks for the ride trophy: Pedro de la Rosa.

Oh by the way, the big boys are about 10 laps away, thrice around the track.

Ferrari is 118 points away. McLaren-Mercedes has 66 and Williams-BMW 43 points. Sauber-Petronas has 19; Jordan-Honda, 15 and BAR-Honda, 12.

The Homers of F1 make the races interesting. Without them Hakkinen need not use the middle pedal, Coulthard need not be blocked by Bernoldi and Dennis wouldn't run down pitlane for a bit of off-track action. A race without the back markers, given parity of budget and skills, will cause the top three teams to cross the finish line all at the same time.

And a stuffed podium after all, is not a pretty sight to see.

Revo sports great looks but needs 'smooth' push

BY RAYMOND B. TRIBDINO
AND TESSA R. SALAZAR

TOYOTA Revo GLX

HOW good does new Toyota's Revo have to be to justify its existence? Really good, we surmise. For in the face of the stiff competition coming from Isuzu and Mitsubishi, it can't be anything else.

The Revo has been quite successful, however, in shedding off its people-shuttling, right-angled, smoke-spewing image. By distancing itself from the boxy and utilitarian Tamaraw in looks and purpose, the Revo has spawned 15 variations. Each iteration is made different by engine, drivetrain, standard features and available colors.

A menu of gearbox and powerplant combinations is so vast and made more confusing by the long roster of features.

So there is the top-of-the-ladder SR (Sports Runner) and its leather-clad counterpart, the SRJ. The well-decked, mid-range GSX follows. Down the line are the GLX, GL and the cellar-dwelling DLX. Except for the upper crust G and S series, a diesel variant is available across the range.

We tested the GSX (which, if accepted conventions are used, may mean Grand Sport deluXe) in a rather strange goldish copper color—two-liter engine; two-tone paint scheme; automatic gearbox; well-clad outside and fully furnished inside.

Luxurious interior

Raymond: Ambience is very un-AUV like. No sweat-inducing vinyl here, just glorious moquette fabric that every behind will appreciate. Seats are firm but well-padded in the right places but I fail to appreciate the long center bench up front. The odd shape makes seating difficult, shifting a chore. This bench belongs only in the more agricultural DLX whose duties, I assume, include packing passengers for money. The dashboard is generic but complete with the necessary gauges. A shift indicator will be appreciated for the automatic version. As would be more cupholders. Now bereft of the annoying dashboard shake, rubbery column stalks and mushy pedal feel of the previous version, this Revo feels more solid and seems to be prudently bolted together.

Tessa: Comfortable seats, the smooth feel of the fabric on the skin. Vanity mirrors for both the driver and passenger, cool. I found an efficient aircon even while driving in the high heat of noon with nine passengers and packages on our way to Naic, Cavite. But was it I or was the aircon too cold for comfort, the control having limited choices? The door handles had no glitches, but one notable feature which most AUV buyers and out-of-towners during summer would love to hear about is its folding rear seat that can produce more space, plus its lift-up tailgate for wider rear access and ease of loading and unloading. The length is 870 mm from the back of the second row seat to the tailgate, while the width is 1,210 mm.

Performance woes

Raymond: On paper, the performance numbers of this 2.0-liter Revo are admirable. It's 11 horses more than the 1999 model's 94 and delivers 164 Nm of torque at 2,800 revolutions of the crankshaft. Peek at the figures for the gear ratios and you'll expect a relatively healthy performance from the engine-and-gearbox combination. On the road however, it fails to produce the expected surge of power. It just casually chugs along, even with the right foot firmly planted on the accelerator pedal, making daring maneuvers troublesome. This rather anemic performance becomes glaring when trying to reach top gear. It'll take the whole chorus of Santana's "Smooth" to get to 60 from red-to-green. That's about 15 seconds until guitar solo. Add 10 seconds more to get to 100 kph. But this doesn't mean the GSX is not fast. Once it does get to top gear, it'll eat up concrete as capably as anything equally propelled. Until that slow-moving beer truck gets in the way. Time to reload Santana again.

Tessa: I have to think twice when executing overtakes. A few times I wished I could just hide my face in an aborted pass. Overtaking is made difficult because the transmission does not respond as quickly. Unlike the pulsating "kickdown" of other vehicles, the Revo GSX A/T accelerates rather slowly, perfect timing when overtaking becomes essential. It does drive well in stop and go traffic, the longer it stays on the gears the more momentum it creates to keep up to traffic's pace. We calculated gasoline consumption at about 8 kilometers per liter on the open highway and a low 6 km/liter in traffic.

Great looks

Raymond: Though it is Mitsubishi who should be initially credited for advancing AUV styling, creating the first Adventure from old Pajero and Galant spares, Toyota brings a smarter package to fore. The GSX in particular, following the visual impact of the Sport Runner, deserves praises for exterior nicety. Except for that funny graphic stripe midsection of the AUV, everything is civilized but a bit snooty. Expect great handling because of the larger 15-inch alloy wheels and Yokohamas.

Tessa: Except for the eerie color of the test unit—Toyota calls it mojave brown—details like the security feature, the Toyota Vehicle Illuminations System (TVIS) with keyless entry, are really cool. It has remote lock control combined with antitheft protection system. Adding more security features are its power feature operations, the power window, door lock and side view mirror.

Ride and drive

Raymond: It will not get high grades on a skid pad test, but the Revo GSX does handle well. Naturally one gets mountains of body roll because of the tall stance and higher-than-a-sedan ground clearance. Rigidity is excellent for a chassis-based vehicle, and gobs of suspension travel soak up all but the harshest of bumps. A fitting description for the Revo's ride is "car-like" and with good reason. Those who have leaf-spring suspended sedans will find the ride not that different. Not harsh, but not silky either.

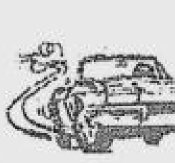
Tessa: OK—you got it—not harsh, not silky. It's somewhere in the middle ground. And speaking of ground, its ground clearance's perfect for the rainy season. I don't need to worry rushing in the flood while driving an automatic transmission.

Objectively, the GSX deserves a 7 for effort. But the lackluster performance was evident from both driver and passenger side. Surely the manual version will produce far better results in that department. (And indeed, according to a fellow motoring journalist, the M/T clocks in at 16 seconds to 100 kph.) Overall, however, the GSX gets good marks for build quality, styling, comfort and features.

The score sheet reads 6 out of a total 10 points. High marks for interior amenities and handling. More points for exterior styling, available variants and color choices. Indeed, there is a lot of room for improvement under the hood. But at a little less than P750,000 it should provide thousands of kilometers of great cruising and sightseeing.

Applause for Ate Glo; the Abalos-Raval fight

FULL TANK



Al S. Mendoza

I HAD to applaud when President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo promised to improve the traffic situation in Metro Manila. She backed up her promise by saying she would build more flyovers and deploying more measures to smash monstrous jams in the big city.

Fighting words, indeed. I'll pray for the success of this truly laudable project (promise?).

But I applauded loudest when she made special mention of the efforts of General Abenina to curb corruption at the Land Transportation Office. The President, indeed, has noticed the LTO chief's determined efforts to institute drastic reforms at his turf, which is historically known as a haven of scrupulous personalities preying on our hapless countrymen.

With the President's mention of Abenina, it only meant one thing: She was 100 percent behind Abenina's determined bid to improve the image of the LTO.

* * *

And since we are at this, may I repeat my suggestion that we also have a three-year cycle insofar as renewing the registration of vehicles is concerned? Maybe, let's start it first with private vehicles as a test case?

I just want to know if this suggestion can hold water or not.

As I said, if we could renew our driver's license once in three years, why not with the registration of our vehicles, too?

Just want to know your thoughts about this, General Abenina.

* * *

In case you still don't know, one of the major reasons the jams occur almost daily in the metropolis is the seemingly endless feuding between MMDA Chair Ben Abalos and Vicente Raval, the police officer who heads the Traffic Management Group.

Abalos has charged Raval of not doing his job properly. Raval has countered Abalos' traffic enforcers do not report religiously. Raval has charged that 200 of the 500 traffic aides do not report for duty at all but they claim salaries every 15th and 30th of each month.

"Our headcount is right but when it comes to reporting to their assigned posts, they are not there," Raval told Cito Beltran of dzMM, referring to Abalos' traffic enforcers detailed with the MMDA.

A serious charge, if you ask me.

When will the two sit together and patch up their differences?

As Ate Glo also said in her Sona speech, "Let's end our bickerings."

* * *

I didn't know that the Toyota Corolla is being sold in 140 countries until Takeshi Uchiyamada mentioned it in his speech during the launch of the new Toyota Corola Altis last July 18 at The Tent of The Fort.

Isn't it amazing that a single model of a car is available in 140 countries? If it's that many, it must really be a good car.

In his speech, Uchiyamada, managing director of Toyota Motor Corp., said over 28 million Corollas have been sold as of the year 2000, making it the world's best-selling passenger car of all time.

Well, I can believe the Corolla is a good car. Malaya J. Mendoza's Corolla XE is almost 10 years old now but it still runs great. I guess that when Malaya finally buys a replacement, she will again seriously consider another Corolla.

Uchiyamada calls the Altis as NCV (New Century Value) to go with the concept of the New Century car.

For Malaya, that sounds attractive enough.

* * *

And now a commercial break from a dear friend: Tiara Commericial has opened Pitstop branches in Bicutan and Parañaque in Metro Manila, and in Capiz, Santiago City and Dipolog. Tiara's Nilo Luna said Pitstop sells tires, batteries, aluminum wheels, lubricants, aircon and car mats. Among the brand-names Pitstop carries are Michelin and Kumho tires, Circuit MF and Boss batteries and Fuchs lubricants.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Since rains bring brownouts, make that flashlight readily available at your glove compartment.

Jaguar marks milestone by presenting its 1.5 millionth car to charity

COVENTRY, UK—Jaguar celebrated the production milestone of 1.5 million cars since the company's formation by donating the car, a XJ Saloon to charity. The celebration also marked the opening of a new state-of-the-art visitor showcase and Jaguar Gallery.

The XJ Saloon was greeted by Jaguar officials, charity representatives and the Lord Mayor of Coventry Councilor David Chater as it rolled off the production line at the company's headquarters in Browns Lane, Coventry.

The car will be donated to BEN, the motor industry's benevolent charity as a tribute to industry employees. With the help of a national British newspaper, the 1.5 millionth car will be offered to readers in a premium telephone promotion with all profits going to charity.

Said Jaguar managing director Jonathan Browning: "It [illegible] proud day for all of us at Jaguar and I want to thank everyone involved with Jaguar, our employees and management team, the designers and engineers, and our partners including the trade unions and national and local government—in fact, everyone who has played their part in making Jaguar what it is today. This production milestone seemed the perfect opportunity to say thank you to all who have made Jaguar's progress possible.

"Since the acquisition of Jaguar by Ford Motor Co. in 1989, Jaguar has grown rapidly. In the early 1990s, we were producing around 20,000 cars per year. This year, with the introduction of the X-Type we will break through the 100,000 cars a year barrier. By the time we introduce the F-Type roadster to our model lineup in three to four years, we will have been transformed from a two-car line company to a five-car line company producing around 200,000 cars a year and be a significant competitor in every market around the world."

Since the launch of the original XJ6 in September 1968, Jaguar has made six generations of XJ series saloons, which between them have reached a total production figure of over 800,000 cars representing more than half of all Jaguars ever built. Originally introduced as a single model range to replace no less than four different predecessors, today the XJ Saloon is the flagship of the expanding Jaguar range, as the largest and most prestigious of three saloons. Jaguar has produced more than 50 models since 1931.

A year of milestones continue for Jaguar in 2001, with both the 40th anniversary of the production of the first Jaguar E-Type and Jaguar's first win at Le Mans some 50 years ago with the Jaguar C-Type. Celebrations will culminate later this year with the centenary of Jaguar's founder Sir William Lyons with a major rally and charity ball.

No more racing on the Skyway

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

SPEED maniacs, beware: you can no longer race your cars on the Skyway. PNCC Skyway Corp., the operator of the Skyway System, has installed radar guns on the North and South Luzon Tollways and on the Skyway to measure the speed of passing vehicles.

The PNCC has also stationed patrols at identified high-speed areas to monitor overspeeding vehicles, not to mention enforce traffic rules and regulations such as the Clean Air Act, Seat Belt Use Law and speed limits. PNCC chair and president Luis Sison, who assumed office last March, set the speed limits at 60 kph minimum for all vehicles and a maximum speed of 100 kph for private vehicles, 90 kph for buses and 80 kph for 10-wheelers and cargo trucks. So the 80 kph max speed sign on the Skyway no longer applies.

The installation of radar guns is part of a campaign to make the Skyway System, which includes the North and South Luzon Tollways, a Traffic Discipline Zone. Motorists who use the tollways regularly cannot fail to notice the new traffic signages, lane markings and posting of orange road cones that deter swerving. The traffic discipline campaign must be working, if the newsletter of Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp., the developer/investor of the Skyway System, is to be believed. Citra's May-June 2001 Bulletin claims that the average number of apprehensions per day from January to May 2001 increased by 43 percent to 196 a day this year from 137 a day in the same period last year. While trucks and buses accounted for the most violations, there has been a significant increase in apprehended cars. From January to May 2000, cars made up only 8 percent of violations but in the first semester this year, that figure jumped to 21 percent.

The presence of radar and the increased possibility of being apprehended for overspeeding will sadden car enthusiasts who use the Skyway on Sundays—when the Skyway is relatively deserted—to test new, high-performance cars or to "exercise" sports cars at speeds ranging from 180 kph to 200 kph. Maybe the PNCC Skyway patrolmen will come to miss the three Ferraris that have been cavorting on the Skyway on Sundays, racing at such breakneck speeds (over 250 kph?) that they were never caught by the traffic enforcers.

On the other hand, those of us who drive at a less spectacular pace cannot deny that travel time between Makati and Alabang, the most heavily used stretch of the South Luzon Tollway (SLT), has been reduced substantially because of the Skyway and the rehab of the SLT's at-grade level. What used to take more than an hour to travel during off-peak hours is down to around 35 minutes these days—if you don't take into account the many minutes of delay caused by Citra's sequestration of toll lanes from the motoring public in favor of e-Pass subscribers who constitute a minority.

Another delaying factor is the bottleneck caused by the single-lane exit ramp of the southbound Skyway after the Bicutan exit. Citra claims that this exit ramp is temporary and the permanent one will be much wider when the Skyway project is extended up to Alabang as originally planned. But here's the catch: Citra can't or won't complete the Skyway project unless its petition to increase toll rates by 300 percent is approved by the Toll Regulatory Board (TRB).

Can you imagine how the prices of basic commodities and services will soar when the one-way toll from Magallanes to Alabang or vice-versa costs P75 for cars and jeepneys, P190 for buses and light trucks and P300 for heavy trucks/trailers? Citra is using the decline of the peso to justify its proposed 300 percent rate increase although the value of the peso has not dropped by 300 percent. It's a good thing that concerned individuals, homeowners' associations and the City Governments of Muntinlupa and Paranaque have filed their opposition and are attending the TRB hearings. Because of the impact of the toll rate increase on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people, the hearings should be regularly covered by the news media.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Bad spellers of the world, untie.

* * *

E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@pacific.net.ph

NISSAN FRONTIER

Pleasure Series dominates local pickup market

NISSAN Frontier

UTILITY, power, traction.

These are the values that make a pickup what it is. It's solid, dependable, all-around transportation for almost all kinds of terrain. A new dimension has been added—luxury. And in no other hardworking, diesel-burning pickup is luxury more evident than in the Nissan Frontier.

The Frontier, whether in 4x2 or 4x4 mode, provides a level of interior comfort not found in pickups of its rugged build and looks.

Universal Motors' Lani de Leon points to the fact that pickups are more often than not used as daily drives. Driven not only as when hauling loads, but also for domestic tasks, such as shuttling the kids to school, trips to the grocery and as the office transporter.

Upgraded series

But one cannot forget truck toughness and versatility, which is why Nissan came up with the upgraded Frontier Pleasure Series. Arguably the most extensive effort at fusing car comfort with truck-hauling power, the Frontier enjoys the title of being the first diesel pickup to be equipped with an automatic transmission.

"The flexibility of the pickup makes it a perfect everyday vehicle, but up until the Frontier, the ride and comfort level has not been as car-like," comments De Leon.

Nissan Frontier's Pleasure Series makes use of a lot of leather—wrapping the steering wheel, shift knobs, seats and door trim—to produce a stately ambience. Simulated wood grain paneling accents the supple leather. White-faced gauges fill the instrument panel while cup holders, utility pockets, twin glove boxes are standard.

A choice of a 3.2-liter diesel in automatic and manual gearboxes for the 4x4 and 4x2 variants is available. As is a 2.7-liter diesel engine mated to a 5 speed manual transmission. The 3.2 version is perhaps the most powerful, yet economical range-topping engine-to-gearbox combination for maximum torque at low engine speeds.

Unparalleled levels of safety

Safety is at the forefront of the Frontier Pleasure series with its driver-side SRS airbag and Zone Body Concept. This Nissan-exclusive safety standard brings together crumple-zone, impact energy dispersion with a rigid passenger cabin providing unparalleled levels of safety for a pickup. The ladder-type chassis provides rigidity and additional safety in both frontal and lateral collisions. Door-mounted side-impact beams absorb side collisions.

It is therefore no wonder why the Frontier took the pickup market by storm in the first quarter and a half of 2001, with 35.9 percent market share.

Available in a barrage of improved colors with bed liners as an added convenience, the Frontier Pleasure Series starts at P744,000 for the 2.7-liter 4x2. The 3.2-liter automatic 4x2 sells at P819,000. The top-of-the-line 4x4 models cost P1,005,000 for the manual. Add P40,000 more for an automatic transmission. *RBTribdino*

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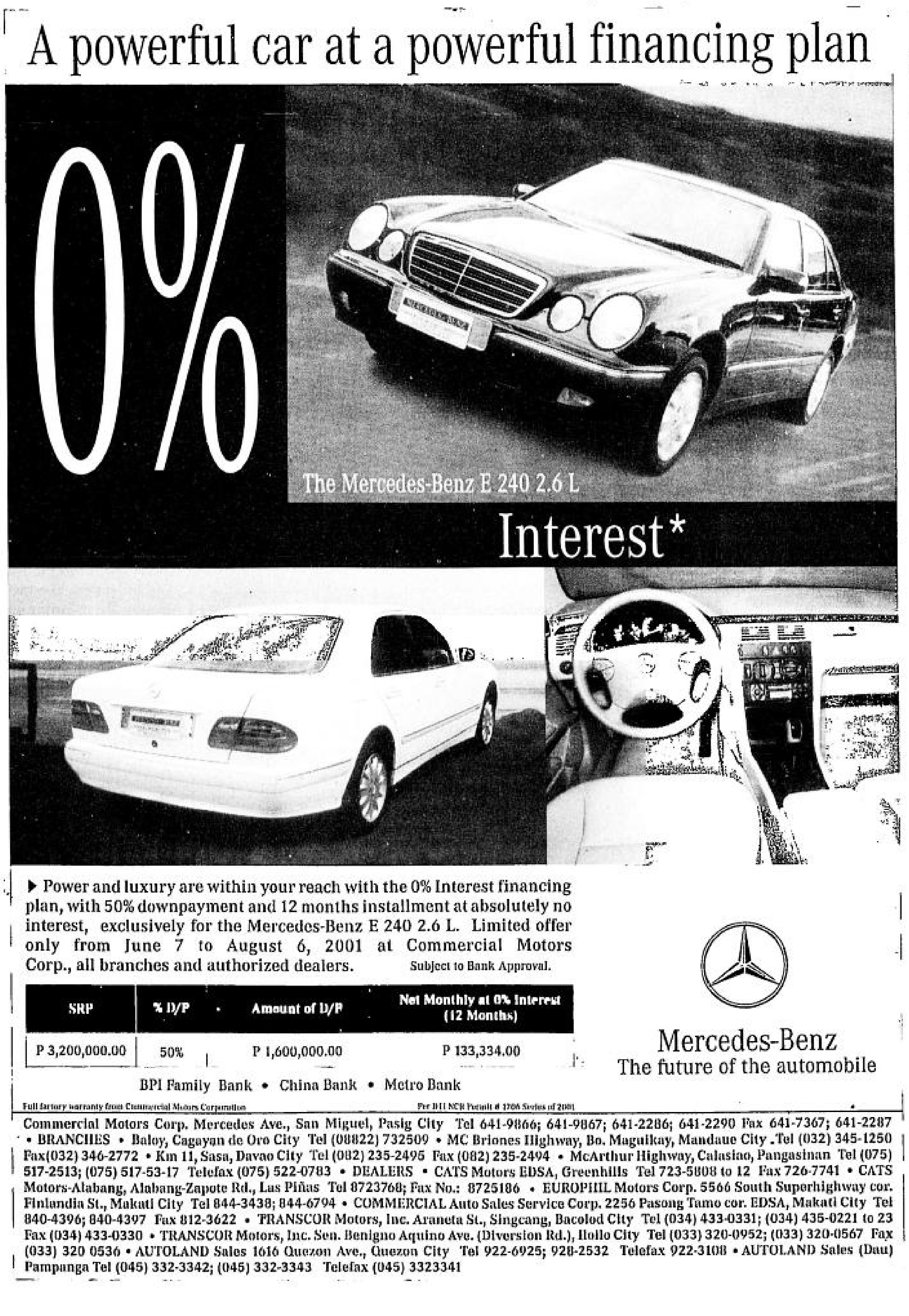

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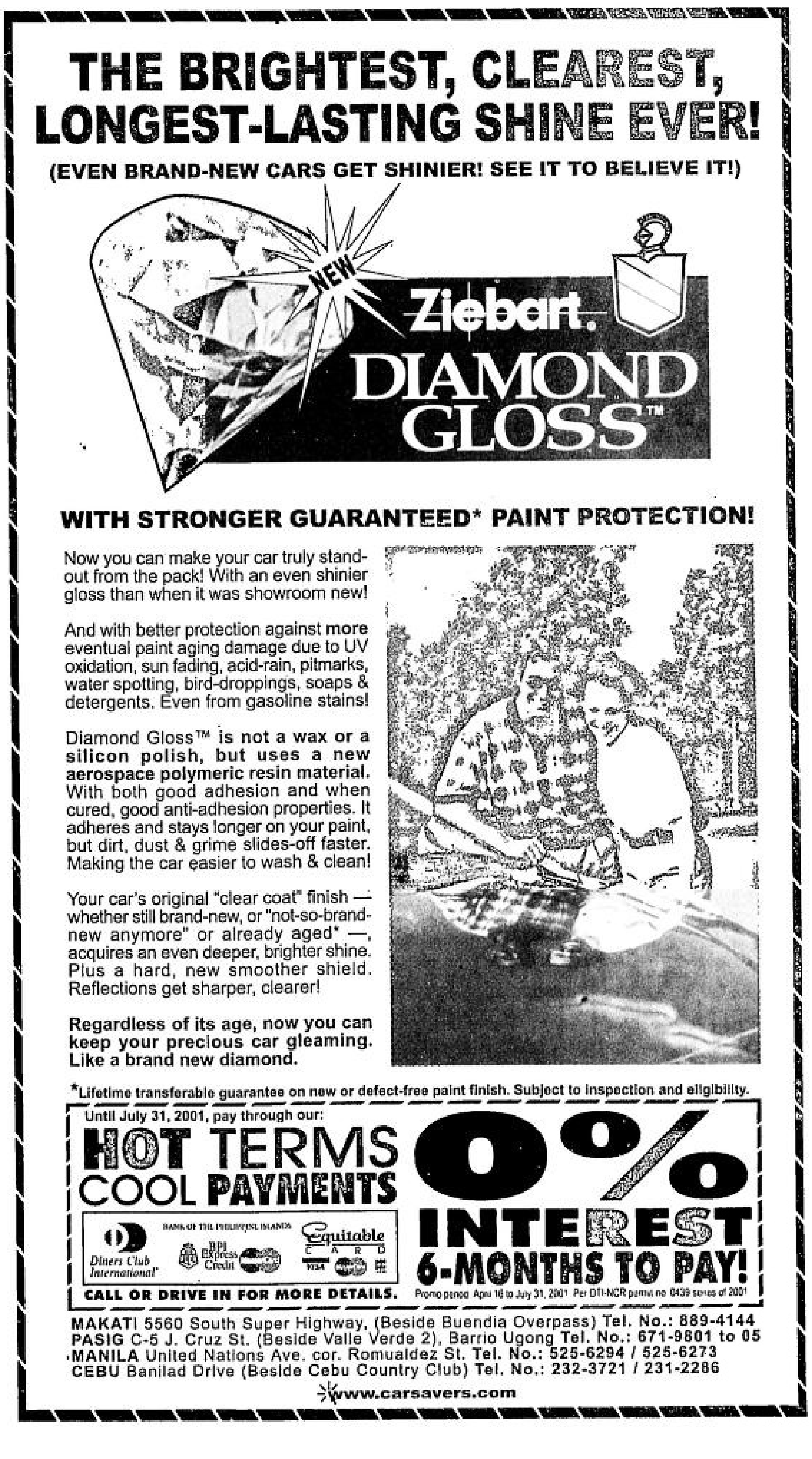

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DEBT TOLL AT $500M

Banks to pay for cement collapse

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PHILIPPINE Cement Manufacturers Corp. warned yesterday that the local cement industry, if allowed to collapse, would create ripples that could cripple the country's financial system.

Philcemcor counsel Susan Villanueva said local banks had extended over $500 million (P26.7 billion) worth of loans to cement companies, more than half the P17-billion loan incurred by the National Steel Corp.

NSC's closure in November 1999 caused jitters that had a severe impact on the banking sector, Villanueva said.

She said banks refinanced the foreign-denominated loans that cement companies obtained prior to the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.

"The loans were used to expand production and distribution facilities, but the cement companies were unable to pay these obligations because of the sharp drop in the peso's value and plunge in demand," Villanueva said.

"The crisis in the cement industry could reach the financial sector, unless the government steps in to stop importers from undercutting local players," she added.

Villanueva, a partner at the Carpio & Villaraza law office, said the country's cement companies would have incurred over $3 billion in losses in 1997 if not for bailout packages extended by their foreign partners.

She said a surge in cement imports from a measly 1.4-percent share in 1998 to 24 percent this year had placed the cement industry on death's door for the second time.

Villanueva said the question to the government was clear: Should it save the cement industry with $2.1 billion in capital and 3,400 jobs at stake or should it tolerate cement importers with their $9-million investments and 71 employees?

Philcemcor has asked the Department of Trade and Industry to impose a temporary 50-percent duty on cement imports for the next 200 days.

Once it obtains the trade department's support, Philcemcor will ask for a definitive duty as well as quantitative restrictions on imports to 177,000 bags a year until 2005.

Villanueva said these measures should bring back the imports' share to 1998 levels while giving local cement makers ample time to recover their losses.

Cement importers, however, have hit back at Philcemcor, which they say is being run by the "Big 4" cement players in the world—Holderbank, Cemex, Lafarge Holdings and Blue Circle.

Maynilad's unpaid fees hit P1.212B

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc.'s unpaid concession fees have risen to over P1.212 billion, according to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

In an interview, MWSS Administrator Jose Mabanta said Maynilad would have to pay these debts as soon as the government allows it to raise its rates by about P4.75 per cubic meter.

Mabanta stressed that should the government allow Maynilad to raise its rates, "Maynilad would have to pay us back because we are, in the meantime, exhausting our general funds."

The government guaranteed Maynilad's debts, which were owed mostly to multilateral lenders like the Asian Development Bank, World Bank and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation. Should Maynilad default on these debts, the government would have to pay for them.

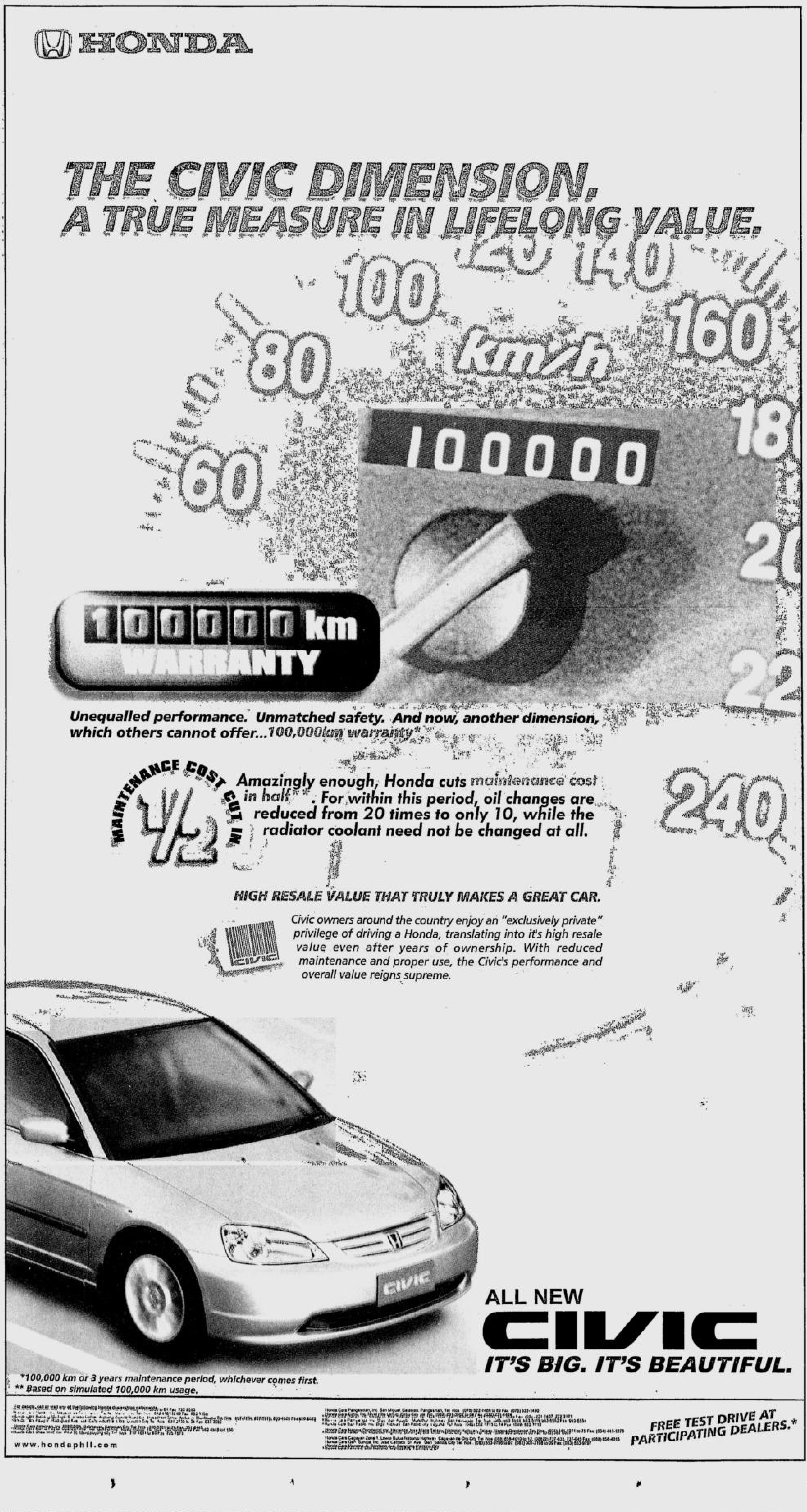
Citing "forces beyond its control," Maynilad has refused to pay concession fees to the MWSS over the last five months.

The company said the debts it assumed from the MWSS nearly doubled to $800 million because of the peso's weakness against the dollar.

Maynilad said these debts were weighing down on its efforts to replace old pipelines in its service area and upgrade its services.

The MWSS earlier attempted to use Maynilad's $200-million performance bond to pay its debts.

Maynilad, however, managed to secure a court order preventing the MWSS from touching its bond. *Christine A. Gaylican*



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Tastes
CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

ASPIRIN
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Take it once a day to prevent
HEART ATTACK

Naughty, naughty

Restaurateur Larry Cruz teases sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing at his new Afrodisia Grill, where you can order a drink called Ejaculada and a dish called Susong Hubad

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

LARRY Cruz's latest restaurant, not yet formally inaugurated when I visited it in early July, is called the Afrodisia Grill (53-A Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan; tel. 723-9705). "Are you sure?" I asked on the telephone, "does it serve aphrodisiacs?" No, answered Jun Ambas when he welcomed me in, "it is just Larry being naughty." Playing with words, he meant, which makes the new restaurant an adventure in ideas and words.

First, the idea. The menu puts it thus: "Afrodisia, n. An exotic state of mind. The desire for satisfaction, fulfillment. The temple of delight. Root word: Aphrodite, goddess of love. Aphrodisiac, n. and adj., referring to something that arouses basic instincts."

Let me add Lesley Chamberlain's take (1997): "History's superstitious masses were always anxious about the origins and maintenance of sexual desire, hence the belief that certain foods are aphrodisiac. Chinese folk-healers and high-street fishmongers still encourage the myth of edible substances working inside the body to generate arousal. The first recommend the velvet extracted from the horns of young stags, a cruel bolstering of human middle age with animal youth. The second suggest cod's roe on toast. Both ideas accord with the ancient faith in the therapeutic efficacy of resemblances: that is to say, for fertility, eat eggs; for youth, eat the young."

Many books explore the idea: can food arouse and maintain sexual desire? The final answer: No, although the tastes and textures, the pleasure of good food and wine, can engender a mood of desire. The only substances—drugs, really—that can be so called are irritants, and dangerous, namely cantharides or Spanish fly, and Johimbine, a substance derived from a South American tree, and not known to occur in food.

Pleasurable pursuit

E. Aguilar Cruz, the wise gourmet and Larry's father, once said that the only related Filipino food is *balut*—an invigorizer, *pampalakas ng tuhod*. So calm down, and remember that it is the mind, the atmosphere, the people, the pleasure that does the job, and not just the food.

The Afrodisia Grill directs the diner's thoughts "to the enjoyment of another pleasurable pursuit: food," through the re-titling of some of the LJC Restaurants' most famous dishes. Drinks start with Ejaculada ("creamy and explosive"), Viaagrum (rum and egg, to "awaken your hidden desires") and from Café Havana, Cuba Libre, Mojito and Limoncito.

Pampagana, now called Foreplay, includes Sisid ("traditional *sisig*, deconstructed"), Susong Hubad (*kuhol* undressed and cooked in garlic, chili and olive oil), Usa Pa Nga (Deer One, or *tapang usa*), and Eggnergizer (fried or fresh *balut*).

From the grill come *bangus* bellies, Kitang Kita Wow (*kitang*), Hita ("*babaeng hito*"), Pok Pok Chop, Legs and Butt SQer, and Gabarilis na Panga (jaw of yellow-fin tuna). These are accompanied by the Afrodisia Sungca Sauce Boat, containing nine sauces, generally hot, to mix and match and thus spark the grilled entrées: tomato *sambal*, *kamias bagoong*, garlic chili sauce, lime sauce with scallions, peanut sauce,

NAUGHTY/ p.C3

THE SUNGKA sauce boat

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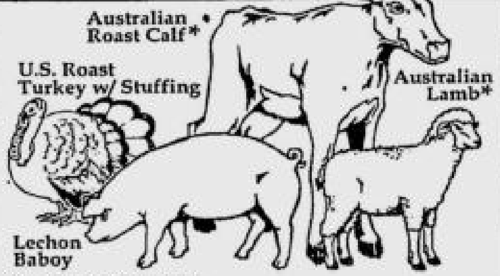

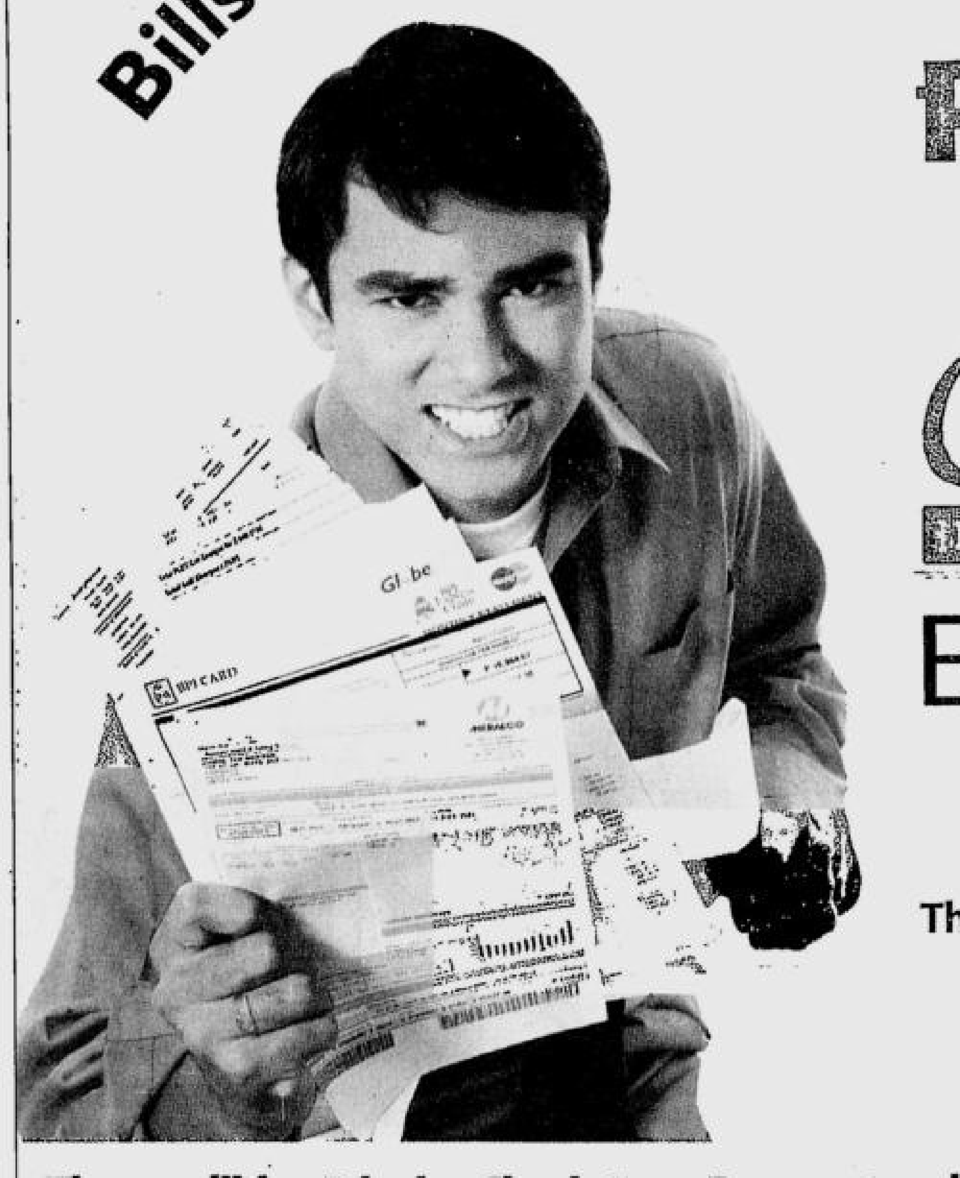

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There will be 5 lucky Check-Free Payments winners in the Grand Draw on August 24, 2001.

1. The promo is open to all existing BPI, BPI Family Bank and BPI Direct ATM cardholders with at least one valid Check-Free Payments reference number (excluding BPI, BPI Family Bank and/or BPI Direct accounts as reference numbers) from June 18 to August 17, 2001. If you still don't have an Express Teller account, open one now and make sure to enroll in Check-Free Payments.
2. A computer-generated raffle number will be assigned for each Express Teller card number enrolled in Check-Free Payments which will be drawn at the end of the promo period. To qualify, you must have a minimum total payment amount of ₱500.00 within the promo period.
3. Just pay your bills from any of the more than 100 merchants through the Express Teller ATM, Express Phone or BPI Express Online.
4. To determine the cash prize, all payments made within the promo period shall be computed (excluding inter-account payments).
5. There will be five (5) winners. Each winner shall receive a minimum cash prize of ₱20,000.00 and a maximum of ₱100,000.00.

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7. The draw will be held at 10:00 AM at the BPI Building, Ayala Avenue corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City on August 24, 2001. A DTI representative will be invited to witness the draw.
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Secrets of Laguna cooking

EVER tasted *adobo* without the soy sauce? How about *afritada* born out of white *adobo* leftover?

These are some of the vintage Biñan treats that cooking expert Lydia Castillo prepares at the Julius Maggi Kitchen as she reveals her best-kept secrets on Laguna cooking ongoing until July 28. Castillo, columnist and former PR practitioner, demonstrates how to cook Laguna's best and finest, like *lumpia*, sweet banana and other gustatory delights from her cookbook, "In My Basket."

Castillo also shares effective tips on how to be a smarter homemaker. Learn useful tips on sourcing ingredients and cutting costs. Call 726-9232/1016.

CRISPY Phyllo Nems with Cilantro Dressing, one of the recipes to be demonstrated

THE PENINSULA Manila senior sous chef Arsenio "Nick" Olmedilla will show how to make the most luscious Lumpiang Alimango (Asian-inspired mud crab spring rolls with vegetable and glass noodles served with homemade *atchara* and tomato-tamarind *camias* chutney), tender and flavorful Kalderetang Biyas ng Karnero (braised spicy lamb shank in tomato sauce with roasted pumpkin and *camote)* and creamy Brazo de Mercedes (baked meringue filled with mango and raisins and drizzled with chocolate sauce) in a cooking class on July 28, 9 a.m.-12 nn, at The Conservatory on The Lobby mezzanine floor.

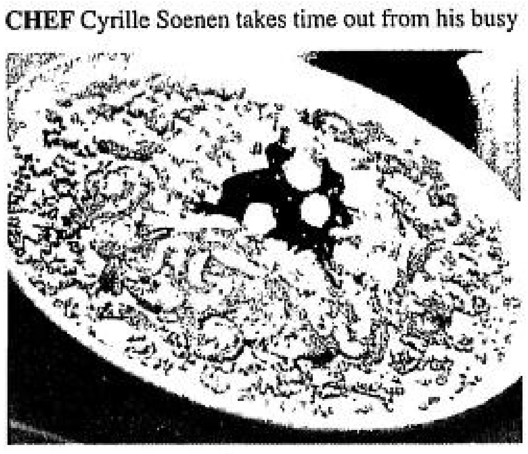
Call The Peninsula Manila at 887-2888, extensions 2205 (Restaurant Reservations), 2236 and 2237 (Roselle Marie Antonio, Banquet Sales Department) or 2168 (Spices Restaurant).

REGGIE Aspiras

CHEF Cyrille Soenen takes time out from his busy schedule at the Prince Albert Rotisserie to conduct a cooking demonstration on July 31, 10 a.m., at Le Boulevardier, Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.

To be demonstrated is a three-course menu of special recipes, namely Crispy Phyllo Nems with Cilantro Dressing, Crispy Duck Breast with Soy Sauce Vinaigrette served with Baby Potatoes and Crispy Duck Liver and Ultimate Chocolate Cake with Strawberry Sauce.

The class is open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 815-9711 local 571 or 572.

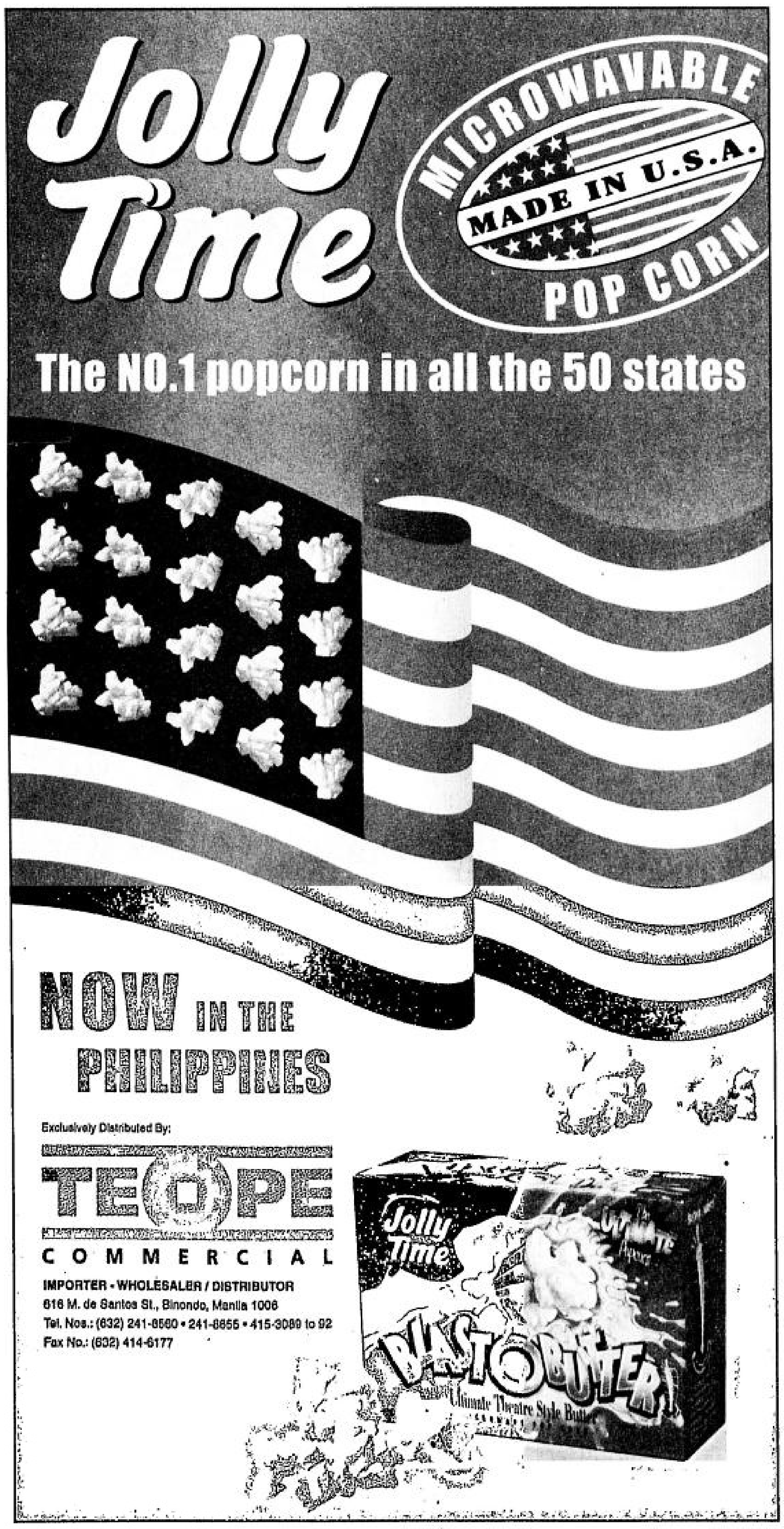


SINGAPOREAN Rojak

NOTED chef Reggie Aspiras will hold cooking classes on "Nonya Cuisine," the latest craze sweeping the United States and Europe.

On July 30, Aug. 1 and 3, Reggie will hold this very limited special classes at the Bon Appetit, 3/L Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Ortigas Center.

Included in the course are: Day 1: Classic Nonya—Sambal Kimchlam, Itek Siyow, Sambal Biimbing, Nonya Nasi Goreng, Otak-Otak (Fish Pudding), Kueh Pisang (Banana Pudding). Day 2: Chinese in Nonya—Pong Tauhu Soup, Chye Tik Kway (Steamed Carrot Cake), Har Cheong Gal (Shrimp Paste Fried Chicken) with Salt Fish Rice, Yam Rice (Hokklen Nonya Paella), Sweet Red Bean Stew. Day 3: Singaporean Classics/Hawker Cuisine: Singaporean Rojak Salad, Laksa (a very popular noodle dish), Singapore's Chili Crab, Tamarind Ox-Tail Stew (Buntut Asam Pedas), Jackfruit Pudding. Bonus: "The Real Technique to Make Delicious Hainanese Chicken, Chicken Rice and Sauces."



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VIETNAMESE Fragrant Soup

MINCED Pork in Lettuce

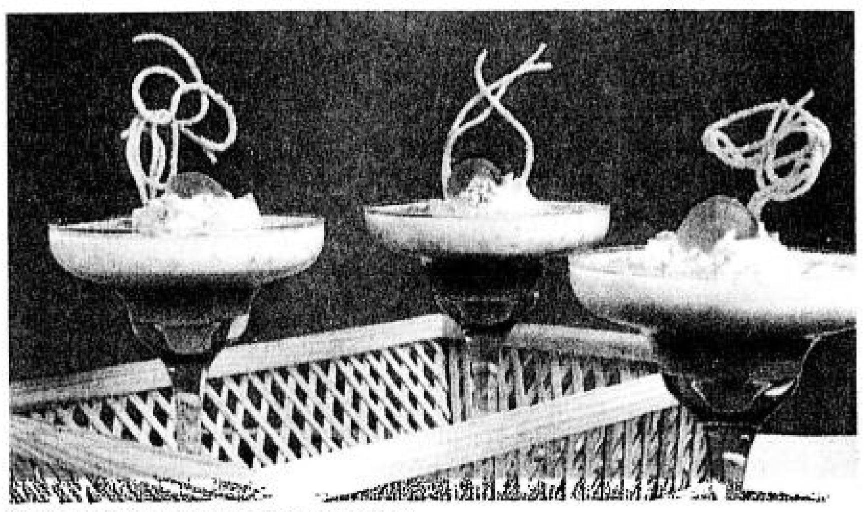
DINING IN

Going Asian

ASIAN food has come of age and gained global fame. The nice thing about living where we do is we don't have to go to specialty shops for ingredients to make the following Asian specialties. Check your cupboards and you'll find most of what you need.

The San Miguel Culinary Center has developed the following recipes using high-quality food products from Monterey, Magnolia Chicken, CampoCarne and Star Margarine and Magnolia Butter.

For more recipe ideas, check out www.sanmiguelculinary.com or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Culinary Center, Legaspi corner Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City 1604.



CREAMY Pandan and Corn Pudding

Vietnamese Fragrant Soup

1 pc chicken bouillon cube
2 pc Thai basil leaves
4 c minced garlic
5 pc chopped ginger
50 g *sotanghon*, soaked in water
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp lime juice
2 pc Magnolia Chicken Breast Fillet, cubed
½ c snow peas (*chicharo*), strings removed and cut into halves
1 c loosely packed cilantro
¼ c loosely packed fresh mint
1 c loosely packed *togue*

In a pot, combine chicken bouillon cube, basil leaves, garlic, ginger, lime peel and water. Cover and let boil. Lower heat and let simmer for 5 minutes. Strain mixture, discard solids and return liquid to heat. Add mushrooms, drained *sotanghon* and soy sauce. Let simmer for another 2 minutes. Turn off heat and add the rest of the ingredients.

Serves 5.

Minced Pork in Lettuce

2 tbsp cooking oil
1 c Monterey Ground Lean Pork
½ c chopped carrots
1/3 c water
¼ c hoisin sauce
½ c ground black pepper
¾ chopped *singkamas*
1 tbsp chopped spring onions
Crispy fried *bihon*, crumbled
Iceberg lettuce

Heat oil in a pan. Sauté pork until color changes. Add carrots and mix well. Add water, hoisin sauce and pepper. Let simmer. Add *singkamas*. Cook over moderate heat for 2 minutes. Stir in spring onions. Remove from heat. Pass around ground pork, lettuce and crumbled *bihon*. Each person assembles her own by spooning mixture into each lettuce leaf. Sprinkle fried *bihon* on top and roll.

Serves 5.

Pandan and Corn Twin Pudding

***Pandan* layer:**
2 c *pandan* water
½ c cake flour
¼ c cornstarch
1 c sugar
Green food color
Corn layer:
1 tbsp gelatin
2 tbsp water
1/3 c sugar
½ c coconut milk
1½ c *sago*, cooked
½ c cream-style corn
2 tbsp Magnolia Butter, melted
Yellow food color
2 tbsp toasted *pinipig*

To make *pandan* layer, mix cooled *pandan* water, cake flour, cornstarch and sugar. Cook over low heat until mixture thickens. Add green food color to attain desired color. Spoon ¼ cup of *pandan* mixture into 12 stemmed glasses or individual dessert glasses. Set aside.

Soften gelatin in 2 tbsp water. Heat to melt and set aside. In a double boiler, mix together sugar and coconut milk. Cook over medium heat until mixture thickens. Add *sago*, cream-style corn, dissolved gelatin and melted Magnolia butter. Add yellow food color to attain desired color. Spoon ¼ cup of the corn mixture on top of the 12 prepared *pandan* layer. Chill to set. Sprinkle with toasted *pinipig*.

Serves 10.

Note: To make *pandan* water, boil 15 pc *pandan* leaves in 3 cups water.

Chicken Popcorn in Chili-Garlic Sauce

1 250-g pack Magnolia Chicken Popcorn
2 tbsp cooking oil
2 tbsp minced garlic
2 tbsp chopped onions
1/3 c mushroom, sliced
1/3 c red and green bell pepper, sliced
1/3 c carrots, sliced
¼ c chili sauce
2 tbsp water

Fry chicken popcorn in hot oil. Set aside. In a wok, sauté garlic and onions in hot oil. Add mushrooms, bell pepper and carrots, and sauté for 1 minute. Add chili sauce and water and bring to a simmer. Toss in fried chicken popcorn.

Serves 2.

Follow the brickroad to TGI Friday's

IF you live in Cainta, Antipolo, Marikina and Pasig areas, chances are you've been awaiting the opening of TGI Friday's at a mall in the area.

The wait is over. To meet its goal of taking its tradition of fun dining to as many people as possible, TGI Friday's has opened its sixth branch in the Philippines at the Brickroad of Sta. Lucia East in Cainta, Rizal. The two-level branch seats 220 people.

"We are very excited with the opening of Friday's Sta. Lucia East. Being a freestanding structure, it has the same character as Friday's branches in the United States," says TGI Friday's director for operations for Asia Al Herzfeld, who was recently in Manila to observe the branch's staff training and preparation for the opening.

"Décor, music and lighting have all been carefully designed to please the guests," says Friday's director for operations in the Philippines Robert Santos.

Upon entering the new restaurant, one will immediately notice the place's elegant "clutter." Juxtaposed against wooden floors, bentwood chairs and striped tablecloths are Tiffany lamps, knickknacks and memorabilia that a full-time antique "picker" has extensively scoured from auctions and flea markets and restored in Friday's Nashville warehouse.

The Sta. Lucia branch offers the same extensive menu selection and rich beverage collection that Friday's is known for: King-sized servings of steaks, ribs, chops, pizzas, sandwiches, burgers and seafood and creative concoctions like the Smoothies and Flings. Friday's corporate chef Marinella Marcelo and her Top Gun team will regularly see to kitchen operations and staff training to maintain food quality. Action at the bar likewise continues with the restaurant's famed bartenders mixing the drinks with their energetic flair.

TGI Friday's Sta. Lucia East is a cozy two-level, freestanding structure.

TGI Friday's Sta. Lucia East is headed by a well-experienced management team composed of general manager Al Cordova and restaurant managers Lance Eugenio, Raffy Santos and Alex Dacasin.

Thirty-six years after Newsweek and The Saturday Evening Post declared the opening of TGI Friday's first branch in New York as the dawning of the singles age, the dining chain continues to provide good food in a cozy, yet lively atmosphere. From a meeting place for single adults, it now caters to families, executives, professionals and teenagers.

CCA enrolment ongoing until August

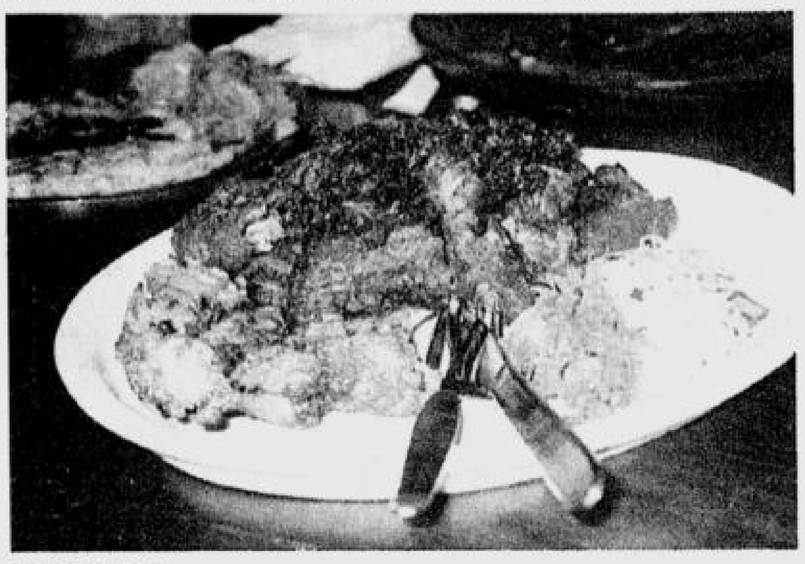
THE CENTER for Culinary Arts (CCA) Manila is offering a new program designed for bakers, entrepreneurs, professionals and culinary enthusiasts. The only one of its kind in the country, the 18-week intensive program has two modules—Bread Baking and Pastry Arts.

The Diploma in Culinary Arts and Technology Management aims to develop the student's culinary skills and competencies in planning, operation and supervision of an institutional and commercial kitchen. It covers areas on food and beverage production, butchery, nutrition, food safety and sanitation and cuisine of the world such as Asian, Filipino, American, European and French. There are also courses on human resources management, material resources management, sales, marketing and promotions and catering and banquet. The course aims to provide students with a solid foundation in the principles, procedures and techniques in culinary arts and management.

CCA has a competency-based curriculum developed by distinguished faculty and professional chefs trained at prestigious culinary institutions here and abroad. Instructors are also Servsafe certified and have passed the Professional and Cooking and Baking Certification Test, a regulated exam by the Educational Foundation of the National Restaurant Association.

CCA is located at Cravings Center, Katipunan Avenue. The center is equipped with five air-conditioned lecture rooms complete with AV equipment. Laboratories have seven fully stocked and well-equipped kitchens. Call 426-4841/4837 or e-mail culinary@info.com.ph.

KUHOL in olive oil, garlic and *sili*, and Tapang Usa



CRISPY Pata

Naughty, naughty

(From page C1)

coriander chili sauce, red-hot chili oil, spicy Korean dipping sauce, and Mongolian Sauce—almost every one *siling labuyo*-inflamed.

More traditional entrées come under Sarap Naman, Ser: Dila, Daliri (braised chicken feet), Ulo (fishhead curry) and Leg (crispy *pata*). Binukakang Pla-Pla; 12-inch Longanisang Ang Hang with Two Fried Eggs and Sinangag; Malutong na Crispy Tadyang Baka; and Alige rice (dubbed "Colateral special").

Soups include Palosjos (stewed eel from the south), The Mummy's Centuries Old Egg, Papa um Mamao Hot @ Sour Soup; Soup No. 5, and Shanghai Joe Dumpling Soup (with choice of crab meat or calf brain filling). And there are Sinigang na Kanduli sa Miso, Gusto Ko ng Baboy Sinigang sa Sampaloc and Bulalo ni Lolo.

Sweet endings (Matamis na Katapusan) list Piniritong Saging ni Tio Paeng à la Mod ("*Di lang mahaba at mataba, pang isports pa.*"), Secret ni Maria Clara, Panaginip ni Klawd (Claude's Dream) and Durian Ice Cream ("*ingat sa side epek*").

Mountain artifacts

You get the idea. By re-titling, Larry teases sight; smell, taste, touch and hearing—as well as memories and associations. Diners take in the savors of LJC best, while their minds dance, their lips smile, they joke with each other, with the waiters and with the menu.

The stellar grilled food was the Gabarilis na Panga, in which the giant yellow-fin tuna jaw was explored for every flavor it had—outside the bones, in the crevices, succulent and vari-flavored, like dark and white meat. The *pla-pla* was butterfly-cut as if in flight, then fried to a crisp. The *tapang usa* and *tapang baboy damo* were flavorful and tender enough. The "undressed" *kuhol* in a shallow dish tempted one to soak the garlicky olive oil sauce up with hot *pan de sal*.

Two vegetable dishes—Gising-gising and Pak Bet ni Manong, provided pleasant accents. I can never resist the lovely sourness of Sinigang na Kanduli sa Miso, with mustard leaves in textural contrast.

And the desserts truly pleased: Maria Clara's Secret being *mang-ga't suman* with ice cream; Claude's Dream *pandan gulaman* with ice cream.

Despite their sighs of approval for the food, my guests liked best of all the decor: Larry's collection of Banawe artifacts. We ate at a long, smooth irregularly shaped table, a slab of *molave* that could seat at least eight. There were carvings and weaves on the wall, and a small gift shop in back with such rarities as scoops, footstools or *bangko* all made from single pieces of wood. The smooth urbanity of the wood came not from the mountain source, but from its having been worn smooth by the years.

Unusual idea it is, the Afrodisia Grill—good food, teasing names, pleasant associations, all harmonized by excellent service and the dignity of mountain artifacts. It is definitely worth more than a visit or two.

LARRY Cruz

SCOOPS and baskets

A spicy sixth for Peking Garden

TO CELEBRATE its 6th anniversary, Peking Garden Restaurant goes hot and fiery with its "Spice Alert" food festival. Don't be alarmed. The menu offerings of spicy dishes are marked with chili symbols: One chili means "moderately hot" and two means "hot." The resto likewise takes pride in its famed Peking Duck, fortune chicken, beggar's chicken and Northern Chinese cuisine. All these are offered with a hefty 20 percent discount until Aug. 12. Call 817-9066/817-9049.

DINING OUT

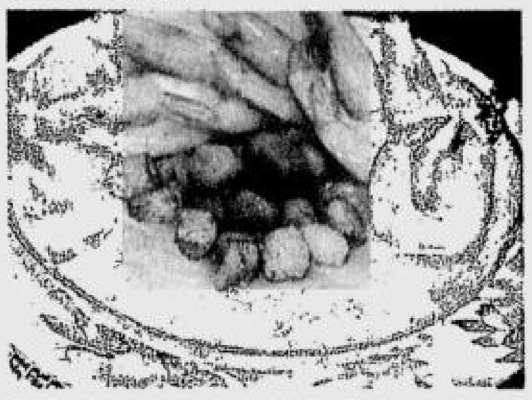
KIMPURA. The Japanese restaurant that has been serving fine Japanese dishes for 30 years is introducing new dishes, including kaisen sarada, an assortment of fresh seafood on a bed of greens with a refreshing light dressing for the figure-conscious, and burokkori ebi uni mushi, steamed broccoli flowerets with diced shrimps and sea urchin roe with a special dip to boot. Located at the 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (892-2307/892-4456) and Greenhills Shopping Center (beside Uni-Mart), San Juan (721-8816/721-8869).

JADE GARDEN. This is the last weekend when you can get a hefty 20 percent discount on all à la carte orders at this Cantonese restaurant. Their "Our Lunch is Lite" promo offers a more relaxing lunch hour where there is less crowd and diners can enjoy its authentic Cantonese dishes without having to "eat-and-run" due to work pressures. Located at the Greenbelt Drive, Greenbelt Park Ayala Center, Makati (892-2319/ 892-2636) and open daily, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.

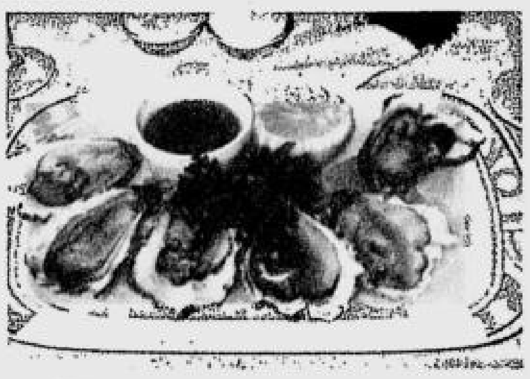
DOME CAFÉ. An Australian-based franchise known for its selection of gourmet foods and coffees, Dome Café offers an array of seafood dishes like Grilled Salmon Fillet, served with herb garlic butter, garden vegetables and risotto rice; Fresh New Zealand Oysters, flown in daily; Seafood Risotto, prawns, squid, grouper fillet and crab in rich and flavorful risotto rice; Soft-Shell Crab, fried whole crab in *aligue* fried rice and garden vegetables. Call 635-9746/635-9625.

MANILA GALLERIA SUITES. Discover the flavors of the sea at the hotel's Raphael Café-Restaurant until Aug. 4. Feast on a choice of salmon, herring and mackarel, fish fillets and spicy sardines; fresh tuna and creamy dressed crab, with prawns marinated in white wine; chilled fish curry, salmon pate, and summer octopus salad; scallops with lime, *lapu-lapu* with cashew nuts in pineapple and seafood rolls with kikiam. Every weekend, starting July 28, Raphael will also feature a Filipino Fiesta buffet. Call 633-7111, local 7416/7313.

KAISEN Sarada



ONE of the "Lunch is Lite" offerings at Jade Garden



AUSSIE oysters

GOLD RANCH. The Australian Oyster and Beef Extravaganza is ongoing until July 29. Oyster appetizers include the oyster shooter, Sydney rock oyster and a sextet of salads with marinated oysters. For main course, choose from the Bushman Swag Steak, a tender rump grilled and topped with a garlic, herb and balsamic glaze; Crocodile Dundee Rib Steak, a 450-g prime rib steak with a raw tomato capsicum, onion salsa with a touch of chilies and cilantro; the Carpetbagger Sirloin Steak filled with three pieces of marinated oysters; and the Jackaroo's 10-oz rib eye steak topped with herb butter. Located at 852 Aranaiz Ave., Makati City and open daily 11:20 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 6:30-11:30 p.m.

NEW ORLEANS restaurant treats diners to its Lunch Barbecue Buffet on Monday to Friday, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Indulge in barbecued baby back ribs, chicken or fish, soup, pasta and Jambalaya (a spicy paella-like combination of seafood, meat sausages, tomatoes, peppers and seasonings). On July 28, it will launch Mardi Gras, a carnival party wherein guests will enjoy Cajun specials, free booze and giveaways. New Orleans is at the Penthouse of the Corinthian Plaza along Paseo de Roxas, Legaspi Village, Makati.

SANDY'S CUISINE, at Food Styles, 6/F, Pacific Star Building, Makati Avenue, Makati, offers Filipino and Thai dishes. Experience the best-tasting meals of Sandy Daza like Adobong Tostado, Pork Spare Ribs, Pork Barbecue, *Sinigang*, *Pinakbet*, Lechon Paksiw, *Tilapia sa Gata*, Grilled Tuna Belly, Kilawin na Tanguigue, *Kangkong* with Oyster Sauce, Grilled Squid, Shrimp Chili with Mushroom, Shrimp Balls, Chicken Pandan, Stuffed Crab and *Bagoong* Rice.

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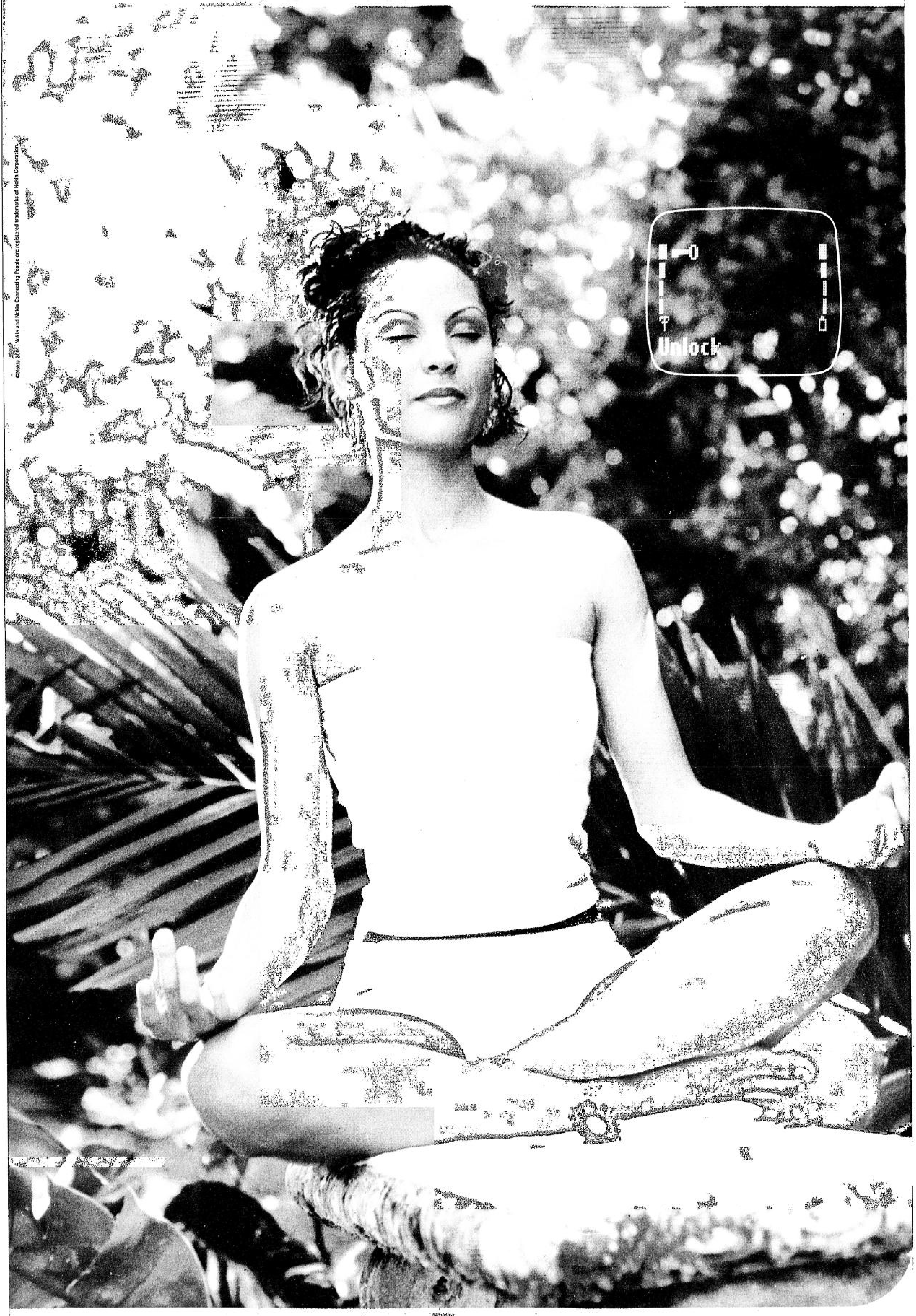

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